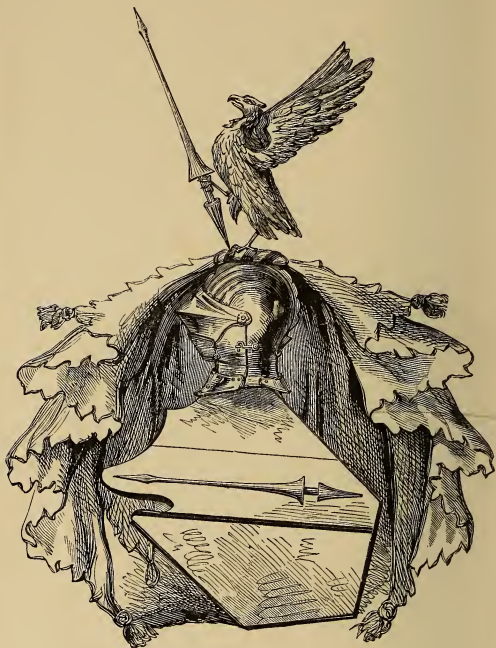


Frontispiece.



"SHAKESPEARE."

"O on a \ S. a Spear. O. Crest a Falcon, wings display'd,
"A, supporting a Spear in I. O. Granted 20 October, 1596, to
"JOHN SHAKESPEARE, of *Stratford-upon-Avon*, in *Com. Warr.*, Gent.,
"per WILL. DETHICK."—(*Index Coll. Arm.*)

122

SHAKESPERE'S HOME

AT

New Place,

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

*Being a History of the "Great House" built in the Reign
of KING HENRY VII., by SIR HUGH CLOPTON,
KNIGHT, and subsequently the property of WILLIAM
SHAKESPERE, GENT., wherein he lived and died.*

BY

J. C. M. BELLEW.

Imprynted in London,

FOR

VIRTUE BROTHERS AND CO.,

I, AMEN CORNER, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXIII.

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Dr. Tracy G. McSwain
Sat. 22, 1931

TO THE REVEREND

GRANVILLE JOHN GRANVILLE,

B.C.L.,

VICAR OF STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

MY DEAR VICAR,

Allow me to Dedicate to you the following Account of NEW PLACE, which would never have been written but for your hospitality.

To you, and to our friend, Mr. Hunt, I, and a little circle of friends, have, on two occasions, been under great obligations in making pilgrimages to Stratford. If you can spend half-an-hour pleasantly with me, I hope you will receive my little Book as an assurance of my lively recollection of the happy hours which I have owed to you. That you may, in recruited health, long live to guard that Shrine which is committed to your keeping, and to enjoy the affectionate respect of your Parishioners, and troops of Friends, is,

My dear Vicar,

The sincere wish of

Your much obliged,

J. C. M. BELLEW.

Thames Cottage, Hampton,

New Year's Day, 1863.



PREFACE.

ON entering a Continental Cathedral the traveller's attention is arrested by an iron Corona studded with burning tapers. They are the humble offerings of devotees.

The following pages are my humble offering at the shrine of that intellectual edifice, so vast in proportion and so lovely in detail, which our Shakespere erected by his works. Let me stand where the iron Corona does, close to the portal, holding my feet in reverence, and not venturing to tread, with any pretence of critical survey, the long drawn aisles of that stupendous structure which astonishes and delights the master minds of our race.

race. I shall not need to be told that the "farthing-candle ray" is a very appropriate simile to characterise the following pages. It is so. But let me pray that it be not blown out, or snuffed out, with cruel heedlessness (puffed, of course, it is not likely to be), because, though its quantity of illuminating power be but a "little inch of light," so far as it does extend, I believe it disperses some darkness, and may prove useful in giving other pilgrims to the shrine, a momentary glimpse of dim distances, which may excite curiosity, and the desire to explore their hidden recesses.

In simple language, I believe a great many facts regarding Shakespere remain to be brought to light; and that, while the critic or scholar has little left to say that is fresh or new regarding his works, the antiquary may have a great deal to discover and to say regarding the man.

It

It is remarkable what a labour of love has been expended by many eminent men of my own profession upon the works of the Poet. In their wake I have not dared to follow ; but I shall have done some good, I trust, if I detect a need and point it out, so that others, wiser, and better than I, may provide for its satisfaction. The title of my book suggests a subject upon which there rests the darkness of an almost profound ignorance. What do we know of the man Shakespere in his home—in his domestic, social, moral character, in his home associations and his home associates ;—nay ! what have we *cared* to know of him in them ?

Let not the reader be deceived, and tempted into reading my book by supposing that I pretend to lift the veil, and with my tiny taper to illuminate the darkness. I do not. But *I do try to*
make

make the darknefs visible ; and to the beſt of my opportunities, I have ſtriven to caſt a little light upon ſcattered points, and ſome few facts, which I think have not previously been publiſhed.

The ableſt and moſt learned man would ſpeak with modeſty and hesitation regarding any work he might publiſh referring to Shakeſpere. It is with the moſt ſincere diffidence that I venture to let the following pages paſs through the Preſs ; but I take courage to do ſo from the belief, that every one who will honour me by reading what I have written, will ſee that I have honeſtly laboured at the facts of my ſubject, and that the opinions I venture to expreſs, are alſo honeſtly put forth.

If I extend this Preface to an inordinate length, it is from my anxiety to have my object underſtood—or, at leaſt, not miſunderſtood.

The

The Pedigrees introduced in this work have cost an infinity of labour, which, the uninterested or uninitiated, would never suppose, in glancing over their statistical descents. It would be unfair to criticise them as if they bore the *imprimatur* of a King-at-Arms. Herald's College will only smile on them as the productions of a tyro. So they are. But, whatever amount of light they give, the flint and steel have been my own.

Ut varias usus meditando extunderet artes
*Paulatim, * * * **
Et filicis venis abstrusum excuderet ignem.

I believe I am turning inquiry in a useful, and much neglected direction, by pressing such pedigrees upon the consideration of those who are curious in Shakesperian investigations. My reasons for so doing will be found in the body of my work. Whether I have laboured to a purpose
and

and done good, or laboured in vain, I leave others to judge.

To the Clopton Pedigree I must draw particular attention, and especially to that branch of it referring to the Combes family. In the Appendix (Article, "Combes") the reader will learn the difficulties and perplexities encountered: and will, I am certain, give me credit for a painstaking pursuit of my object, and hold me pardonable if I should be found hereafter to have made any mistakes. In the Appendix, likewise, will be found many curious facts reflecting upon the persons to whom reference is made, which I considered could not be legitimately introduced into the body of my work. The singular discovery made, with regard to the man Bott (Appendix A, p. 341), will explain how it came to pass that New Place was originally sold.

"Qui s'excuse, s'accuse!" If so, my
excuses

excuses must amount to self-accusation ; but of one thing I do not accuse myself, and that is, of thanklessness to the various friends who have given me their help. To Mr. T. Duffus Hardy, Deputy Keeper of Public Records ; Mr. Burtt, and Mr. Cole of the Record Office ; to Mr. Planché and his *confrères* at Herald's College ; to the Vicar of Stratford, his Curates, and William Butcher, the Parish Clerk ; to Mr. Clarence Hopper, in making a variety of researches for me ; to Mr. Hunt, Town Clerk of Stratford, in patiently enduring my endless letters and inquiries ;—to these gentlemen, and to a number of others, whose kindness has had my private thanks, (because they object to being mentioned here,) I am greatly and sincerely indebted. Let me offer my thanks likewise to another person. To John Middleton, Attendant in the Reading-Room of the British Museum,

not

not only of late, but for years, I have been indebted for constant attention. I thank him most heartily; and think I do myself honour when I go a step out of my way to mark the obligations, which those who frequent the British Museum, the Record Office, the Will Office, and all other such public institutions, owe to the courtesy always extended to readers and searchers, not only by the superior officers of those places, but also by their humbler assistants.

I shall be pleased, if, on closing my book, any of my readers feel a freshened interest in the *Man*—William Shakespere; and above all, I shall be best satisfied if they are led to think with me, that this Prince of Poets was a worthier and better man than we vulgarly account him; that Shakespere's Home is a subject deserving our study and respect; and that he was no hypocritical mouther of fine sentiments

ments, inditing with his pen the noblest and loftiest teaching, and belying it in the conduct of his life.

I conceive that no one can teach effectively, that which he has not himself felt earnestly ; nor until good can be put for evil, and evil for good, can I bring myself to think that the purest intellectual refreshment of a race thirsting after knowledge, pours from a polluted source. I picture Shakespere to myself as an embodiment of the manly, honest, and lofty virtues, which his Muse delights to crown with honour ; and half my reverence for him would be gone if I did not feel morally convinced that the greatest of all human teachers, was not only a Great Man, but also a Good Man !

* * * As Shakespere's name has been spelt by so many different people in so many different ways, I may remark that the orthography I have adopted is that of the Grant of Arms in Herald's College, 1596 ; believing, as I do, that the spelling in that document was dictated by Shakespere to Dethick.

CORRIGENDA.



Page 205.—“no one could,” read “no one would.”

Page 205.—“Gilrow,” read “Gildon.”

Page 218.—“those years enjoying,” read “those years
as enjoying.”

Page 230.—“Revels,” read “Revel.”



NEW PLACE,

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.

“ **O**N the north side of this Chapell
“ was a Fair House, built of brick
“ and timber, by the said Hugh, wherein
“ he lived in his later dayes and dyed.
“ On the south side of which Chapell
“ stands the Grammar School.” These
words, quoted from Dugdale’s “War-
“ wickshire,” and referring to Sir Hugh
Clopton, Knt., were, until the other day,
the chief record possessed by Englishmen
of

of the house in which William Shakespere also "lived in his later days, and "died." At length the stones prate of his whereabouts, and it seems desirable to lay their information before the public.

Every one, even remotely interested in the subject, is aware, that a short time back, the land on which Shakespere's house was known to have stood (usually denominated "Shakespere's Garden," and, as such, pointed out to persons visiting Stratford-upon-Avon,) was for sale. It is equally well known that an appeal was made to the public by Mr. Halliwell [*vide The Times*, October 15, 1861], and that the plot of land in question, was rescued from the grasp of private speculators, or showmen, to be vested in the charge of trustees, and by them to be preserved for ever—set apart, and, in effect, consecrated to the memory of the man who lived there, happily accordant with

with the prayer expressed in Garrick's words:—

*“ And may no sacrilegious hand
Near Avon's banks be found,
To dare to parcel out the land,
And limit Shakespere's hallowed ground.
For ages free, still be it unconfined,
As broad and general as thy boundless mind.”*

As soon as the sympathy of the public for the object in question was exhibited, the ambition of its promoters expanded as the subscriptions increased; and nothing less than the full and entire recovery of the estate once possessed by Shakespere at New Place, would satisfy these ardent and enthusiastic individuals.

Goldsmith complained (to Doddsley after dinner) that his was an “unpoetic age.” There are many chatterers of the present day who repeat the complaint, which seems to have become stereotyped for all time. It was a foolish thought

thought to say "an unpoetic age," for every age must seem to the men of the day matter of fact and unpoetic. To-day always appears prosaic; yesterday and to-morrow—subjects of retrospection and anticipation, not objects in possession—are the fit themes for poetry. Goldsmith's age, however prosaic it may have seemed, gave *him* good proof of its poetic appreciation; and so our age (iron age though it may be) gives equally good proof of its admiration for the real poet and for genuine poetry, wherever it finds the one, or reads the other.

If the true poet lives in the hearts and memories of his countrymen, how much more the Prince of all the Bards?

There are those who will boldly assert that Shakespere's works do not attract, and that people generally, care little or nothing about Shakespere himself. It is not to the purpose in this place to enter
into

into any discussion upon such topics. It might, however, be argued that the students of his works have found themselves compelled (unless contented with being guilty of ignorance) to make the Poet's plays the companions of the closet; and that from the student's closet the most valuable interpretations of his text have issued of late years. Such an argument would infer that the marvellous creations of the Poet's mind command peculiar respect at the present time; and it may be unhesitatingly asserted, that abundant evidence is forthcoming to prove that this is a fact. There has not been an era in English literature more fruitful in labours of critical comment upon the text of Shakespere, and more inquiring into every sort of evidence likely to throw light upon his life and history. It might also be argued, that the people of England are just

just as proud of, and just as interested in, the fame of their countryman—are just as anxious to preserve with sacred care every relique and memento of the brightest genius the world has ever produced, as any of their forefathers have been. Circumstances, perhaps, would warrant the assertion that the present generation exhibits more interest in him, and more reverence for everything connected with him, than any other since his death. The sentiment of George II., that Shakespere's plays are bombast, no longer commands courtly acquiescence; and the Carlton House fashion of depreciating his works (particularly by those who had never studied them) is a fashion that has had its day. Doubtless, the conservative feeling of this period with reference to the Poet's birthplace, his last residence, and the few reliques connected with him that survive, has been operated upon by
that

that revival of taste for architecture, and that reverence for mediæval art, which does honour to the reign of Victoria, and will hereafter signalise it. The historian will tell how, from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, the ecclesiastical architecture of England universally, and the domestic generally, became baser and still more base ; until, towards the close of the Georgian era, it reached a depth of degradation (land-marked by the introduction of Roman Cement and Cockney Villas) than which nothing could be more infamous. The same historian will tell of the great work that Pugin did, of the consequent resuscitation of taste, and of love for architectural beauty becoming a necessary part of polite education. He will tell how (as the legitimate accompaniments of such regenerated refinement) the English people awoke to the conviction that the fabrics of their churches had

had

had been at the mercy of Goths and Vandals, and that the most interesting historical remains of domestic architecture had been shamelessly destroyed or barbarously mutilated. Then came the Restoration: a restoration in its particular province more beneficial and remedial than some chronological events designated by that phrase have proved.

To the therapeutic spirit, so happily prevalent in England at the present period regarding mediæval art, may fairly be attributed some measure of the interest, and a great amount of the funds, which have been subscribed to restore the birthplace of Shakespere, in Henley Street, at Stratford; and also to save his last place of residence from being utilised for "building lots," or vulgarised by any speculative Barnum.

For some months the subject has dropped out of public notice. The terrific calamity

calamity at Hartley Colliery, and the incumbent subscriptions of all generous and charitable people, for the widows and orphans of the deceased ; the heavy visitation upon the Queen and country, followed by the Memorial Fund ; and last of all, the increasing want of our long-suffering and brave fellow-countrymen in Lancashire, calling for the admiration and sympathetic contributions of those who can aid them in their dire necessity, have, for a period, checked any appeals to public sympathy, except those of an urgent character.

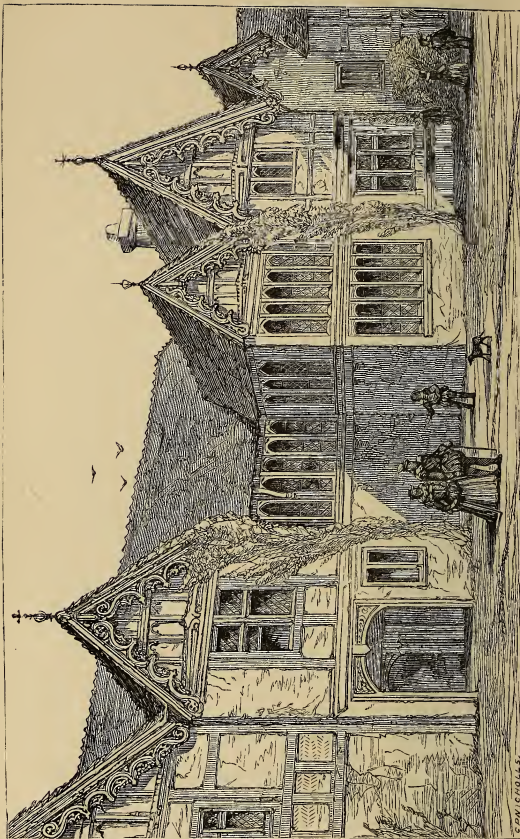
In the face of such griefs and such wants, it was impossible for the Shakspeare Fund subscription list to keep its place before the public. It has, probably for this reason, been temporarily withdrawn. If so, the act has been judicious. While the subject is in abeyance, it may be well to consider what has been done
with

with the money subscribed, because a judicious expenditure already made, would be the best basis of appeal to the public for further moneys to meet future outlays.

It is familiar to every one, that Shakespere's residence at Stratford was called "New Place." There are popular errors in existence, both about the place, and the name of the place. It may be acceptable to the reader if a few facts are thrown together to tell its history, which will be no information to those who have been interested in New Place, but may be instructive to many not "read up" in the subject.

New Place came from, and returned to, the family of Clopton. The Cloptons possessed it long prior to Shakespere's time, and repossessed it by intermarriage (subsequent to Shakespere's time) with a daughter of Sir Edward Walker.

Dugdale (as quoted) states that the
house



OCKWELLS, BERKSHIRE.

house was built by Sir Hugh Clopton, of brick and timber. Sir Hugh lived in the reign of Henry VII. The general appearance of the building can be easily imagined, though *there is no drawing of it in existence.*

The plate on the opposite page gives a representation of a house built about the same time that Sir Hugh Clopton erected "New Place." It presents to us the front elevation of "Ockwells," in the parish of Bray, Berkshire, at present possessed by Mr. Grenfell, of Taplow. This house is stated to have been built during the reign of Richard III., and is one of the very few specimens of *domestic architecture* now remaining of that date. The Great Hall, until lately, was adorned by a beautiful stained-glass window, emblazoned with the armorial bearings of Henry VII., and the Duke of Somerset; but, in a spirit akin to Vandalism, this most interesting remnant

nant of antique heraldry has been removed from its proper place, and fixed up in Mr. Grenfell's new house, on Taplow Hill. It will not surprise the public, knowing this fact, to learn that Ockwells is turned into an ordinary farm-house; that its architectural interest and artistic beauty, as well as antiquity, are apparently unappreciated; and that its noble hall, with open-worked Gothic roof and oak wainscoting, is made a ploughboy's lumber-room, filled with agricultural implements, ploughs, spades, sacks, barrows, and rakes.* The accompanying drawing of Ockwells has been given in order to present a faithful representation of a "great house, built of wood and timber," of the time of Henry VII. It is only to be

* An unsatisfactory history of the house, accompanied with two admirable drawings of the window referred to, will be found in Lyson's "*Magna Britannica*," Berkshire, Bray, parish of.

be regarded as a specimen of a period, from which Sir Hugh Clopton's house would no doubt differ greatly in detail, but with which it would agree in character and effect.

The lovers of "illustrated works" have been indulged with a plate representing Shakespere's house at New Place; but a drawing of a castle in the air would have been equally authoritative and correct. This is one error concerning New Place that needs to be exploded. No authentic representation of it exists. When Dugdale uses the words "brick and timber," and tells us that the house was built in the reign of Henry VII., any one who has visited Coventry, Chester, Shrewsbury, or the "Mint" at Bristol, will be able, in his mind's eye, to picture the general appearance of Shakespere's house, with its multiplied gables, its overhanging eaves, its barge-boards, enriched with

with the Tudor flower-ornament (as at the Coventry Almshouse), its projecting windows, its strong framework of cross-beamed, black, old English oak forming the ribs or skeleton of the house, the intervening squares built in with brick (probably plastered over and whitewashed), its wooden porchway, open-arcaded, with a room above, whose oriel windows displayed the falcon and tilting spear.

Of that house, which Sir Hugh Clifton built, and in which Shakespere subsequently lived and died, not a vestige remained but yesterday. Like the insubstantial pageant (of the Poet's play), not a rack was left behind, as far as any living man could tell.

Shakespere's Barn may, in a certain sense, be said to have existed up to 1861. In that year a couple of cottages occupying that portion of New Place garden which adjoins the theatre on the west,
were

were taken down, having, in the first instance, been photographed, and then stripped to the framework of which they were constructed. These cottages had been contrived by subdividing the ancient barn belonging to Shakespere. On removing the thatch, the lath and plaster work from between the beams, and reducing the building to its skeleton structure, it was found that, in the lapse of two centuries and a half, all the timbers of the barn had, from time to time, been replaced, with the exception of some three or four small beams. These were the sole remains of the Poet's Barn.

The recent purchase of New Place led to a series of excavations, and the discoveries which have resulted, (though not very extensive,) are extremely interesting, and definitely settle several points which, heretofore, have been subjects of surmise and speculation.

The

The leading facts regarding New Place are these :

- 1st. New Place was built by Sir Hugh Clopton, *temp.* Henry VII., *circ.* 1490. He died in London, 1496, and being a bachelor, devised it to his great-nephew, William Clopton, who died in 1521.
- 2nd. From the Clopton family it passed by purchase to the family of Bott, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1563.*
- 3rd. By Willian Bott it was resold to Wm. Underhill, within a short space of time, between 1563 and 1570.†
- 4th. William Shakespere purchased from the Underhill family, for £60, New Place, consisting of “one messuage, “two barns, and two gardens, with “their appurtenances,” during the Easter Term of 1597, in the 39th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth,

* Appendix A.

† Appendix B.

beth, and the year after his only son, Hamnet, had died. By him it was repaired, renovated, and fitted up for his permanent residence.

5th. March, 1616. Shakespere made his will, leaving it to his daughter, Mrs. Hall, for life ; after her, to her daughter. The month following, April 23, 1616, his reputed birthday, he died in this house, and was buried two days later, on the 25th, in the 53rd year of his age.

It was a happy accident that the reign of Queen Elizabeth had begun before the birth of the Poet, otherwise this country would have lost the most valuable records regarding him. As soon as the Queen ascended the throne, the registries of the parish churches were carefully kept. The Register-book of Stratford Church contains entries both of the baptism and the funeral of Shakespere.

“ 1564,

“1564, April 26. Gulielmus, Filius “Johannes Shakspere.” But this merely records his baptism, and not the date of birth, which baptismal registers have never done, and even now do not, although the value of such entries is apparent.

The entry of the funeral runs thus :—
1616, “April 25, Will. Shakspeare, Gent.”
6th. Mrs. Hall succeeded to the property, and from her it passed to her daughter Elizabeth, Lady Barnard.
7th. Lady Barnard (Shakspeare’s granddaughter) according to an indenture dated 20th October, 1652, covenanted that New Place should be had to the use of herself and her husband, John Barnard, during their natural lives, and in default of issue, should be left to the use of such person or persons as she should limit or appoint. Lady Barnard executed a will, 29th January, 1669, whereby
New

New Place was left to Sir John Barnard for his life, and to the use of his executors for six months after his death. Lady Barnard died a few days afterwards, and was buried at Abington, February 17th, 1669. Her will was proved 4th March, 1669. The property continued in the possession of Sir John until his death in 1673; subsequent to which, according to the provisions of the aforesaid will, New Place was sold. An indenture, dated 18th May, 1675, conveyed it “to bee and enure to the only use and behoofe of Sir Edward Walker, Knt., Garter Principall King at Armes,” who completed the purchase for the sum of £1,060.* He died, as the monument in Stratford Church states, the following year—February, 1676.
8th.

* Appendix C.

8th. The only child of Sir Edward Walker, Barbara,* married Sir John Clopton,

* A native poet of Stratford, by name John Jordan, and by trade a wheelwright, published in 1777 a poem entitled "Welcombe Hills" (which are in the neighbourhood of Stratford). In allusion to one of the Clopton marriages—that of Edward (the issue of the above Sir John and Barbara his wife) with Martha Combe, the last person of note of the family of John a Combe (Shakespeare's friend)—the poet exclaims:—

*"Till a late failure in the issue male,
Turn'd, though unprejudiced, the lineal scale,
An heiress Combe, right well to be ally'd,
Became the heir of neighb'ring Clopton's bride."*

As Mrs. Partheriche, the descendant of this alliance, will be alluded to, the marriages are here subjoined, though the Pedigree of Clopton, *in extenso*, will be found elsewhere.

Sir Edward Walker.

Barbara Walker = Sir John Clopton.

Edward Clopton = Martha Combe, last of the line
of John a Combe.

Edward Clopton = Martha, d. of Thomas Middleton,
Esq., of Mundham, Surrey.

1 2 3 4 5 6
| | | | |
Children
deceased
while young.

7
|
Frances Clopton, = John Partheriche, Esq.
the last of her
family. She sur-
vived her husband.
D. 1793.

Clopton, of Clopton, in the parish of Stratford, and thus New Place returned again into the Clopton family. Sir John deceased, April 18, 1719. By him New Place was bequeathed

9th. To his younger son, Sir Hugh Clopton, of the Middle Temple, one of the Heralds of the College of Arms, and Recorder of Stratford.

10th. Sir Hugh Clopton *pulled down* New Place, *entirely rebuilt* it, and died in the *new New Place*, 1751, aged 80.—*Temp.* George II.

11th. Sir Hugh's son-in-law and executor Henry Talbot (brother of the Chancellor Talbot), sold it to the Rev. Francis Gastrell, 1753.

12th. Gastrell destroyed the modern house, and razed it to the ground, in 1759.

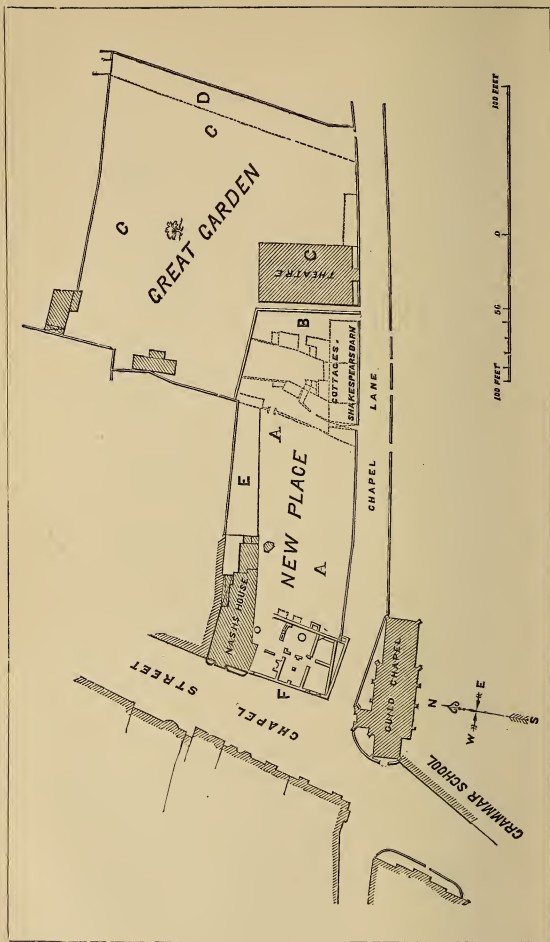
13th.

- 13th. The subsequent history of New Place—1775 to 1862—may be told in a few words. Mrs. Gastrell sold the property to W. Hunt,* Esq., of Stratford, in 1775.
- 14th. The trustees under the will of W. Hunt, on the 29th Sept., 1790, sold to Charles Henry Hunt,† Esq., who subsequently purchased of Fanny Mortiboys, spinster, the adjoining house, now known as “Nashe’s “House.”‡
- 15th. The assignees of C. H. Hunt, on the 15th May, 1807, conveyed the whole of the property described
upon

* Grandfather of W. O. Hunt, Esq., the present Town-clerk of Stratford. He was a promoter of the Jubilee of 1769. Garrick corresponded with him.

† The second son of the aforesaid W. Hunt.

‡ It is only during the present year that it has been ascertained that this house belonged to Thomas Nashe, who married Shakespere’s grand-daughter, Elizabeth Hall.



GROUND PLAN of NEW PLACE and the GREAT GARDEN.

upon the Ground Plan as "New Place," including that now occupied by the "Theatre," to Edmund Battersbee and William George Morris, Esqs., Bankers.

16th. In January, 1829, the heir-at-law of E. Battersbee, and the assignees of W. G. Morris, *sold off the property in lots.*

A—including Nashe's house, was purchased by Miss Lucy Smith.

B—the Cottages formed out of Shakespeare's Barn, were purchased, the one by Michael Prentice, the other by Thomas Webb.

C—the Great Garden (now a Bowling Green), including the ground now occupied by the Theatre, was purchased by Edward Leyton.

D—is a strip of land which formerly belonged to the Clifford Charity, and
was

was acquired by an exchange effected by Mr. Gastrell. It never belonged to the Great Garden in Shakespere's time, though it has continued a part of it since Mr. Gastrell acquired it.

E—is a strip of Garden at the back of Nashe's house, which always belonged to Nashe's house until 1790, when it was purchased by C. H. Hunt, and became an integral part of lot A, of which it has ever since continued a part.

F—is the ruins of foundations lately uncovered, in which is identified a small portion of Sir Hugh Clopton's "Great House" of New Place, and a much larger portion of the second house, built about 1720 (paragraph 10).

17th. In 1834, the said Edward Leyton purchased Webb's cottage, and in 1838 he also purchased Prentice's;

so that he became possessor of the whole of the two lots B and C.

18th. On the 23rd of January, 1836, the trustees of the above-mentioned Lucy Smith, under her will, sold the lot A to Mr. David Rice, Surgeon. Some time about this period, between 1836 and 1844, Edward Leyton sold that portion of the Great Garden whereon the Theatre now stands, for the erection of that most hideous structure. By the knowledge of this fact, the reader will see what amount of “veneration” a staring brick building, raised less than thirty years ago, can claim from the public.

19th. In July, 1844, the only daughter and child of Edward Leyton, contracted marriage with Chas. Frederic Loggin. Mr. Leyton then settled the whole of the remainder of lots B and C

B and C to himself for life, to his wife after him for her life, and after her, to his daughter, under trustees, for her life, *giving them power to sell*.
20th. We are thus brought down to the present period, and to the last sales that will ever occur upon the New Place estate.

A was purchased by Mr. Halliwell, by private contract, of the trustees under the will of the above-named surgeon, Mr. Rice, for the sum of £1,200. It was conveyed 21st March, 1862.

B and C were purchased by Mr. Halliwell, by private contract, of the trustees under the settlement of Mr. Loggin, for £2,000. They were conveyed February 8, 1862.

Accordingly, there still remains to be purchased that piece of ground whereon the theatre stands, sold off from the
Great

Great Garden a few years ago. This "theatre" (so called) belongs, at the present moment, to a body of shareholders, who are prepared to sell their rights—the ground, buildings, &c.—for £1,100. No doubt this purchase will, at no distant period, be made; and then the whole New Place property will belong to the public, vested in the corporation of Stratford, to be preserved by them for ever, for the contemplation and enjoyment of the English people.

The above detailed facts have been arranged in paragraphs, so that the reader may, with greater ease, carry in memory the changes and chances to which New Place has been subjected.

The familiar entries in the church books of Stratford regarding Shakespere's baptism and burial having been given, it will render the subject more complete if the

the principal facts regarding his marriage, and the issue of that marriage, are added in this place; for it can scarcely be doubted that Shakespere purchased New Place in order to provide a home for his wife and children during his long absences in London—a home which he laboured hard to sustain—a home to which he always retired when the seasons of temporary repose arrived; when, being set free from the mental and physical exertions necessary to carry on the business of Blackfriars and the Globe Theatre, he could enjoy (as he ever loved to do) the sweet associations of that home, and the delights of the Garden of England—the luxuriant valley of the Avon.

Numberless efforts have been made to discover the registry of Shakespere's wedding. Up to the present time, all such efforts have proved vain. The probability—almost the certainty—is, that it
has

has long since perished. His marriage bond and license (bearing date 1582) are preserved at Worcester among the archives of the diocese. They run thus:—

“Noverint universi per presentes nos
“ffulconem Sandells de Stratford in comi-
“tatu Warwici agricolam, et Johannem
“Rychardson ibidem agricolam, teneri
“et firmiter obligari Ricardo Cofin gene-
“roso et Roberto Warmstry notario pub-
“lico in quadraginta libris bonæ et
“legalis monetæ Angliæ solvend, eisdem
“Ricardo et Roberto hæred. execut. vel.
“assignat suis, ad quam quidem solu-
“cionem bene et fideliter faciend, obli-
“gamus nos, et utrumque nostrum per
“se pro toto et in solice hæred, executor
“et administrator, nostros firmiter, per
“præsentis sigillis nostris sigillit. Dat.
“28 die Novem. anno regni Dominæ
“nostræ, Eliz. Dei gratia Angliæ, Ffrancæ,
“et

“et Hiberniæ Reginæ, Fidei Defensor,
“&c., 25^o.”

“The condicion of this obligacion ys
“fuche, that if hereafter there shall not
“appere any lawfull lett or impediment
“by reason of any precontract, consan-
“guitie, affinitie, or by any other lawfull
“meanes whatsoever, but that William
“Shagspere one thone partie, and Ann
“Hathwey, of Stratford, in the dioces of
“Worcester, maiden, may lawfully solem-
“nize matrimony together, and in the
“same afterwarde remaine and continew
“like man and wiffe, according unto the
“lawes in that behalf provided; and,
“moreover, if there be not at this
“present time any action, sute, quarrell,
“or demaund, moved or depending before
“any judge, ecclesiasticall or temporall,
“for and concerning any fuche lawfull
“lett or impediment; and, moreover, if
“the

“ the said William Shagſpere do not pro-
“ ceed to ſolemnizacion of mariadg with
“ the ſaid Ann Hathwey without the
“ conſent of his frindes ; and alſo if the
“ ſaid William do, upon his own proper
“ coſtes and expenſes, defend and ſave
“ harmles, the Right Reverend Father in
“ God, Lord John, Buſhop of Worceſter,
“ and his offycers, for licencing them the
“ ſaid William and Ann to be married
“ together with once aſking of the bannes
“ of matrimony betwene them, and for
“ all other cauſes which may enſue by
“ reaſon or occaſion thereof, that then
“ the ſaid obligacion to be voyd and of
“ none effect, or els to ſtand and abide in
“ full force and vertue.”

Here follow the ſignatures, or *marks*,
of the witneſſes ; the firſt reſembling the
attempt that an aged perſon would make
to draw a triangle ; the ſecond being a
clumſy letter C. Two ſeals are added :
the

the one is defaced, the other bears the impresson "R. H." Who was "R. H.?" Could this be the seal of the bride's father, Richard Hathaway? and instead of the license being procured in secrecy, as Mr. Collier has suggested, may it not have been granted with the full knowledge and consent of Richard Hathaway? Even supposing that there might be truth in the view which De Quincey and Mr. Collier have taken of this marriage—that it was accomplished hurriedly and secretly—such an argument would strengthen the supposition that "R. H." was the bride's father, and that he had accompanied Shakespere to Worcester, in order to see that the license was duly secured. Such a supposition would be most natural if there was any ground for scandal, which many persons have shown a singular fancy for insinuating. The "mature young
"woman, five years past her maturity,"
being

being "led astray by the boy with two
"and a half years to run of his minority,"
is objectionable to De Quincey's contem-
plation. Perhaps the idea is more absurd
than objectionable.

The evidence of "legal documents"—
"a story so significant and so eloquent to
"the intelligent,"—certainly shows that
Shakespeare procured his license, 28th
November, 1582, and that his first child,
Susannah, was baptised the following
26th May, 1583. But what then? Did
the mature young woman lead the boy
astray; and did the indignant R. H., on
discovering the truth, insist upon an im-
mediate marriage, to hide his child's
disgrace?

This would be one way of explaining
the procuring of the license; and there
might then be great significance in the
seal of "R. H." appended to the bond!

It has been conclusively shown, from
the

the very registers of Stratford, that marriages, with the same "significance of "dates" between the church ceremony and the baptism of the eldest child, were customary at Stratford.

It has also been shown, that they were customary in England, and on the continent; and before any scandal was hinted at, as to the purity of the "mature young "woman," it would have been well for the marriage customs of the age, and of people in Shakespere's rank of life, to have been carefully studied. Even in this nineteenth century, there are rustic parts of northern England, in which the snort of the iron-horse has never been heard, where such primitive customs still survive, and contracts of marriage are made precisely as they were in Shakespere's day.

In such bucolic, or, as they might be called, "uncivilised" parts, marriage
is

is "honourable among all men," and as duly celebrated as the contract is made.

*"Is it a custom?"
Ay, marry, is't."*

It is difficult to understand how a youth of Shakespere's age, and of his disposition, could be suspected of secretly and suddenly binding, "in the prayers of holy "church," a connection that he had formed shamefully. Reverence for the memory of so great a moralist, and so warm a champion of female purity and innocence, should prompt every examiner of his life and acts, to compare those acts with the habits and customs of the days in which he lived. Knowing what were the marriage customs common among the folk with whom the poet was early associated, and seeing that his marriage was in accordance with their habits, it is most natural, and certainly most charitable,

able, to suppose that friends like John Shakespere and Richard Hathaway should be well pleased for their families to be connected in marriage. That Ann Hathaway was older than William Shakespere might be her misfortune, but was not her fault. The "mature young woman" could not help herself; and possibly she may have been kept under her father's roof, denied to the swains of Shottery, waiting until such time as young William Shakespere could, with any propriety, marry. At length the heads of houses agreed that they might be contracted; there was a pleasant trip to Worcester for the license; "R. H." went to see that everything was done duly and in order; William and Ann were married,—and, it is to be hoped, "they lived happily ever after."

We are indebted to the antiquarian, Sir Robert Philipps, for discovering the
bond

bond and license in 1836, in the Consistorial Court of Worcester. In the original it is full of legal abbreviations, as given in Mr. Knight's Biography. For the sake of simplicity, the full text, as rendered by Mr. Halliwell, has been adopted above.

The probability is, that the ceremony of marriage was performed in the Chapel of Luddington, a hamlet of the parish of Stratford, at a short distance from Shottery, the residence of Ann Hathaway, and a place with which the Hathaways were connected. The Marquis of Hertford, to whom Luddington belonged, informed Malone that he remembered there were tenants of the name of Hathaway on the estate. One, John Hathaway, farmed part of the estate as late as 1775. It is also worthy of note that the curate of Luddington was the Rev. Thomas Hunt, who was schoolmaster of
Stratford

Stratford School when Shakespere would almost certainly be a pupil there.* If the master and pupil were good friends, the fact might be a strong inducement to Shakespere to be married at Mr. Hunt's church. Licenses granted for the parish of Stratford, would, of course, be available for all churches and chapels within the parish, at which marriages were allowed. Luddington Chapel was taken down many years ago, and its registers have either been destroyed or lost.

The annexed Pedigree will give all necessary particulars regarding Shakespere's family, his marriage, and his issue. Writers upon this subject have commonly stated the marriages and descents in the ordinary letterpress of their works, which, in such matters, is confusing.

* Masters of the School:—1570, Walter Roche; 1572 to 1577, Thomas Hunt (buried at Stratford, April 12, 1612); 1580, Thomas Jenkins.

T

E, OR ARD

egree of Arden, gi
traces fro
W

Robert Arderne.
W. about 1484.
Aged 26.
Alive in 1484.

Robert A
Groom of the
to H. V
Born about
Obtained a G
17th year. 1
Married in hi

B

Ba)
A Anne.
hur B. Aug. 9, 170
Æt: Buried Feb. 5, 1
5.

Will. Mary.
Buried April 28, 1745. B. Oct. 7, 1709.
Cat Buried April 28, 1745. B. Oct. 7, 1709.
Bap. M

ey. 1746.
1616
17.

Ann.
Sept. 29, 1740.

Ann.
Bap: Aug. 16, 1767.

n th

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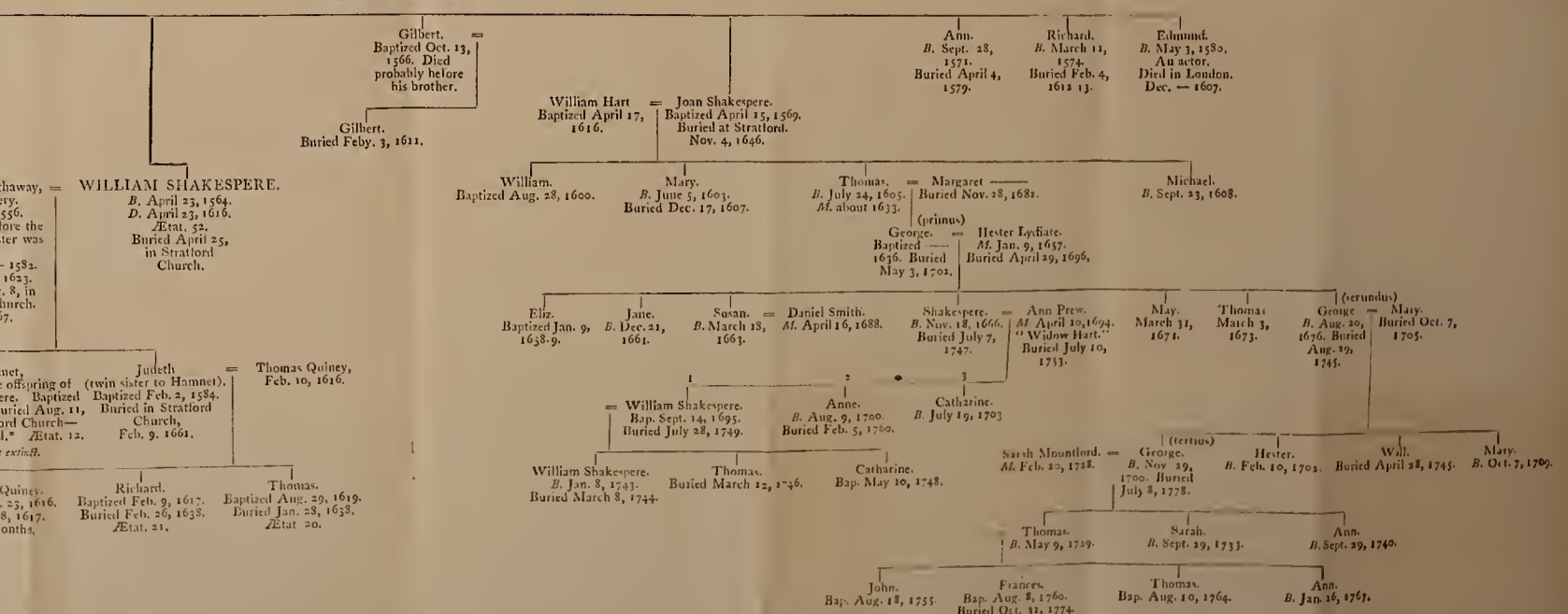
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(COMPILED BY J. C. M. BELLEW.)

The Pedigree of Arden, given by Dugdale (Cantworth, Hundred of Hemlingford), traces from the time of Edward the Confessor.

Walter Arden = Eleanor,
d. of John Hampden,
in the County of Bucks, Esq.

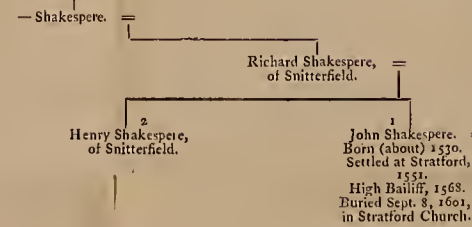


The Records of Warwickshire show that the family of the Shakespeares had been settled in that county since the 14th century.

In the reigns of Henry VI. and Edward IV., branches of this family are traced in many of the townships of the Shire.

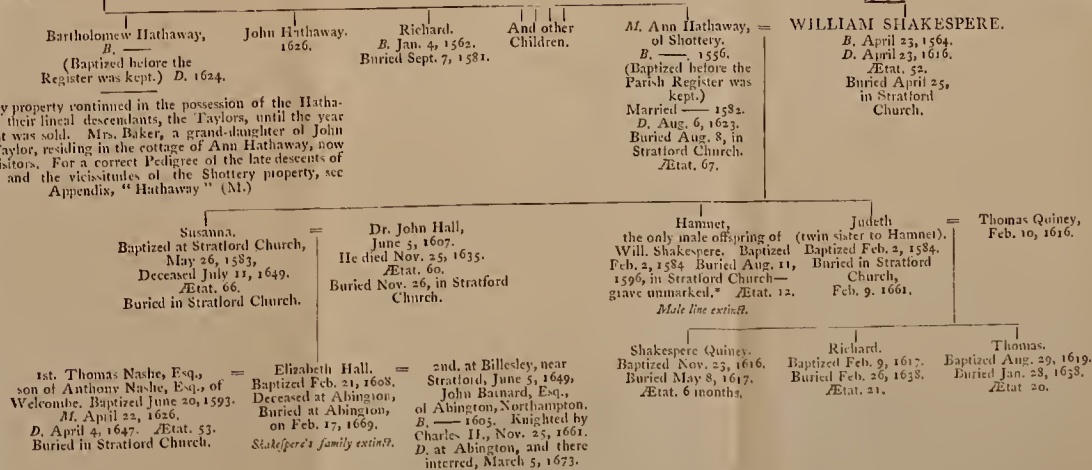
During the 15th century the name is repeatedly found in deeds, registries, &c., connected with parishes in the neighbourhood of Warwick and Stratford.

The Great Grandfather of John Shakespere, who "for his faithful and approved service to the late most prudent Prince, King Henry VII., was advanced and rewarded with lands and tenelements in those parts of Warwickshire where they have continued by some descentes."—Draft of Grant of Arms. 1599.



John Hathaway,
of Shottery,
temp. H. VIII.
|
Richard Hathaway, = Joan, his Wife.
of Hewland, Shottery,
in the Parish of
Stratford.

The Shottory property continued in the possession of the Hathaways, and of their lineal descendants, the Taylors, until the year 1838, when it was sold. Mrs. Baker, a grand-daughter of John Hathaway Taylor, residing in the cottage of Ann Hathaway, now shows it to visitors. For a correct Pedigree of the late descent of this family, and the vicissitudes of the Shottory property, see Appendix, "Hathaway" (M.).



- Malone states that the sexton of Stratford Church told him that Hamnet was buried in the same grave as his mother.

fusing. Where a Pedigree is set out, the eye instructs the memory much more easily and directly, and for this reason the present method has been adopted.

Allusion has been made to a popular error regarding Shakespere's residence. Paragraph 10 (p. 21) states that the house in which he lived was pulled down at the commencement of the last century. Any representation of that house, to be authentic, must therefore bear date previous to 1719. No such plate or picture exists, and there is no evidence of any such having existed. In order to satisfy public curiosity, two were invented; the one published by Malone, the other by Samuel Ireland, father of the notorious forger of Vortigern and other Shakesperian MSS. Malone's picture was a draft upon imagination, drawn by John Jordan, of Stratford, to whom reference has been made. Jordan was perfectly prepared,

prepared, for a consideration, to invent or compose, or make himself generally useful. In first publishing Jordan's representation of New Place, Malone accompanied the drawing with this title, giving it a place in his book, but preserving a complete silence himself as to the value or authenticity of the drawing:—

“New Place, from a drawing in the
“margin of an ancient survey, made by
“order of Sir George Carew, (afterwards
“Baron Carew of Clopton, and Earl of
“Totness,) and found at Clopton, near
“Stratford-upon-Avon, in 1786.”

Jordan subsequently confessed that he had invented the porch of the house; and Malone himself approved of his adding Shakespere's arms, because “*they were*
“*very likely to have been there* ;” suggesting, at the same time, “neat wooden
“pales, which might be placed with propriety before the house.” Ireland, in
his

his work upon the Avon, produced an engraving of the house, which he boldly asserted was authentic, and taken from a drawing in the possession of Mrs. Partheriche, of Clopton House, the last of the Clopton family, *which drawing, however, had unfortunately been destroyed!* His words are as follows :—

“ I have taken the liberty of giving a
“ view of the house as it stood at the
“ time he resided there, which he did
“ from the period of his quitting London
“ till his death. The view is copied
“ from an old drawing of one Robert
“ Trefwells, made in 1599, by order of
“ Sir George Carew, afterwards Baron
“ Carew of Clopton, and Earl of Totness.
“ It was found in Clopton House in
“ 1786, and was in the possession of the
“ late Mrs. Patriche, who was the last of
“ the antient family of the Clopton’s.
“ The drawing, I am informed, is since
“ lost

“lost or destroyed.” Whether destroyed before Ireland made his copy, he omits to mention; but it is of no particular consequence, as the impudent attempt at imposition betrays itself.

In the statements set forth by Malone and by Ireland, it is impossible to overlook these facts: they both assert that the drawing was found in the year 1786, and they both use the identical words, “made by order of Sir George Carew, “ afterwards Baron Carew of Clopton, “ and Earl of Totness.”

Three improvements of the story are introduced by Ireland, who favours us with the extra information that the drawing was made by one Robert Trefwells; that it was made in 1599, and that it was in the possession of Mrs. Partheriche, the last of the Cloptons. Despite these additional baits to beguile the public, and give the story an increased air of truth, it is impossible

possible to avoid the impression that Ireland was pirating Jordan's invention ; and that while he was pointing a moral for future writers, he was adorning a tale at the moment to answer his own purposes.

On comparing the drawings given by Malone and by Ireland, it is palpable that the one is a very slightly altered copy of the other, or that they are both copies of some third drawing. If a third—possibly genuine—drawing had existed, such as Malone asserted, and Ireland re-asserted, did exist, executed at the instance of Baron Carew, it is evident that such drawing would not have exhibited a porch of Wren's era (*temp.* Charles II.) stuck in front of a drawing made in 1599 (*temp.* Elizabeth). But we have Jordan's confession that "he added the "porch." A genuine drawing, therefore, in the possession of Mrs. Partheriche, would have been minus the porch which
Jordan

Jordan added, and minus the arms upon that porch, which Malone approved, because "they were very likely to have been there." What shall be thought, then, of Ireland's picture, which presents to us the confessed imposition practised by Jordan, and improved upon by Malone?

There can be very little doubt that Ireland took Malone's drawing, added barge-boards to it, and reproduced it as copied from an original at Clopton House.

Two questions of interest still remain to be asked. Did any such drawing ever exist on the margin of a survey? If such did not exist, how came it that Malone lent himself to the impudent invention of Jordan, and published it as genuine, knowing that in some respects Jordan had "improved" it?

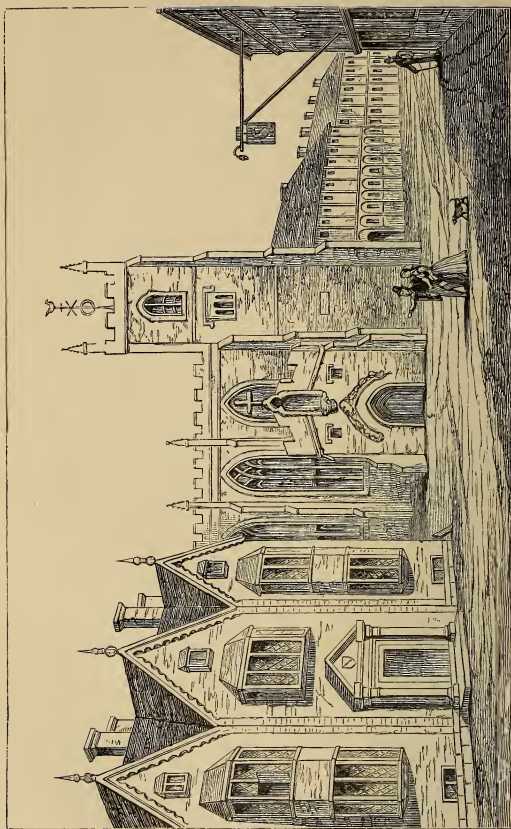
It is hard to believe that any such drawing existed—certainly not as described by Malone, on the authority of Jordan—
because

because a survey of his property, made by Lord Carew in 1599, would not be a survey of other people's estates. Lord Carew was contemporary with Shakespeare, and might have known that New Place belonged to him two years prior to the making of the survey—if such were ever made. But whether his lordship knew this or not, it is most certain that his surveyors, in making plans and drawings of his estate and the tenements upon it, would not introduce in the “margin of their survey” a house which, at least thirty-six years previously, had been sold out of the Clopton family. When it is remembered who and what the “Poet “Jordan” was, and how ready he was to perpetrate any imposition upon the public, it seems most probable that he invented the “margin of the survey made by order of Baron Carew,” in order to impose upon Malone, particularly as the existence of such

such a survey or plan of a nobleman's estate was most likely to exist.

But was Malone imposed upon? Did he believe Jordan's statement, and regard the drawing as a genuine copy of an original representation of Shakespere's house?

Malone may have been predisposed to be deceived; he may have received the drawing with credence at first, as Walpole did Chatterton's records of ancient painters; but when Jordan got to improving the house, and adorning it with very probable coats-of-arms, it is hard to believe that Malone's faith was blind and unsuspecting; while it seems still harder to condemn him as *particeps criminis* in an attempt to pass off upon the public, as a "great" Gothic house of the time of Henry VII., renovated in the time of Queen Elizabeth (when houses were still built in exactly the same style and manner—the only difference being in the



NEW PLACE: as it was represented by IRELAND.

(AN EXACT COPY OF THE ORIGINAL DRAWING.)

the “debased” *details* of ornamentation, pinnacles, tracery, &c.), a drawing which only needs to be glanced at, and it is instantly self-condemned.

A fac-simile of this drawing will be found in Knight’s “Biography of Shakspeare” (note on New Place, p. 501). It has been repeatedly copied and presented to the public, so that it seems unnecessary to give it one more “last appearance” in this place. It and the drawing given by Ireland may be called *arcades ambo*. The plate on the opposite page, which accurately reproduces Ireland’s, may safely be regarded as twin-brother to the Jordan-Malone picture, the details being the same in both, with the single variation already noticed. The barge-boards, as seen in the accompanying plate, which Ireland furbished up and added to the foiled imposition of Jordan, may well be compared to the swaggering attempt of a gentleman,
out

out at elbows and destitute of a change of linen, who seeks to impose upon the public by mounting a clean collar on a manifestly dirty shirt.

The reader has only to examine and compare this picture with the picture of Ockwells to perceive, that though it might pass muster for the “oyster-shell” Gothic of Horace Walpole’s fancy, it is as unlike the genuine domestic architecture either of Henry VII.’s reign, or the “debased” of Queen Elizabeth’s, as Walpole’s lath and plaster toy-shop at Strawberry Hill was a bastard imitation of the style he pretended to affect.* It will be observed that the “timber and brick” described by

* The following letter, written by Horace Walpole, and now among the family papers of the Lord’s Dacre, at Belhus, Essex, has never been made public. It has been kindly placed at the disposal of the author by Sir Thomas Barrett Lennard, Bart., and will be read with interest, both as displaying the sycophantish style in which Walpole addressed his superiors, and also his architectural taste :—

[“STRAWBERRY

by Dugdale have altogether vanished in Ireland's representation, and that a flat, pasteboard-like uniformity of frontage is presented, in every respect opposite to the character of true Gothic architecture, in which the lines are invariably broken up by

“STRAWBERRY HILL, *July 11th, 1777.*

“I cannot receive joy from Bellhouse, my dear Lord, without giving it, and without telling your Lordship how particularly kind I took it from Mr. Hardinge, in acquainting me with his intended marriage,—I had no right to expect such attention, but by my zealous wishes for his happiness. When anybody that is perfectly content, as he seems to be, thinks of making others happy, it is the best proof of a good heart. When misery is communicative, it may flow from want of pity, comfort, advice, or assistance; but when happiness is neither insolent nor selfish, the monitor must be benevolence. Without including myself in this description, I enjoy the satisfaction your Lordship, Lady Dacre, Mrs. Harding, and Lord Camden must have, in the felicity of so deserving a young man. It is talking, too, like an old one, but surely all the rising young men of the age have not Mr. Harding's good qualities. Your Lordship did me the honour of inviting me to Bellhouse; it seemed ungrateful not to thank you, and yet gratitude was the true motive of my silence. I waited till I could tell you that I could accept the honour of your offer. I have had company, and various engagements that prevented me, and am not yet at liberty from the
“precarious

by gables, dormer windows, porches, and deep barge-boards, producing shadows, relief, and infinite variety. Ireland produced this wretched drawing in 1814. Mrs. Partheriche (concerning whom he was so ignorant that he could not spell her name correctly)* died in 1792. As
the

“precarious state of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester’s
“health, and from expecting him and the Duchess in
“England.¹

“I was still more flattered, though very unworthy,
“by your Lordship’s thinking of consulting me on your
“improvements at Bellhouse; nobody is more attached
“to the beauty of your seat, nor shall see your additions
“with more pleasure, but I have not the vanity to
“presume to direct them. You have not only done
“everything there with taste, my Lord, but to my taste
“of ‘*ancienne noblesse*,’ and since cheesemongers can
“be peers, I would have the mansions of old barons
“powdered with quarterings for distinction; and since
“Mr. Adams builds for so many of these, I wish he
“would deviate from his style of Filigraine, and load
“them with the Tuscan order, which admits very
“speaking columns. “When

¹ His Royal Highness had married the Countess Waldegrave, daughter of Sir Edward Walpole, and niece to Horace Walpole.

* See quotation, p. 41.

the supposed original picture was unfortunately destroyed when in that lady's possession, it might seem difficult for any ordinary mortal to make a copy of it in 1814: but difficulties of this sort are trifles easily surmounted when genius, like another Joshua, repeats the marvel of Ajalon, and puts back the courses of time.*

Dismissing both Jordan's invention and Ireland's imposition, there is another matter of error which deserves remark. Theobald asserts, that when Shakespere
"repaired

"When I have a day at command, will Lady Dacre
"and your Lordship allow me to make use of your
"permission, and wait upon you. I will not take that
"liberty, however, without asking if my visit will be
"seasonable. I am, my dear Lord, with the truest
"regards,

"Your Lordship's most obt.

"humble servant,

"HORACE WALPOLE."

* Appendix D.

“repaired and modelled” New Place, he gave it that name. This is not the fact. In the survey of 1590 we find the following entry :—“ Villielmus Underhill, “gen. tenet. libere quandam domum vocatam *the Nerwe Place* cum pertinentiis “per reddit. per annum, xij*d.* sect. cur.”

Conclusive evidence is thus afforded us, that years before the Poet had any interest in the property, it was known by the name which has ever continued its “household “words.” Sir Hugh Clopton, who built the house of New Place, happens to have styled it in his will “the Great House;” and such it has been supposed was its ordinary appellation. It is a supposition in search of a reason. The phrase seems rather an expression on the part of Sir Hugh, applied to his mansion as compared with the general size and importance of the tenements that surrounded it, than the title of the place itself. It well deserved

served the honourable designation; for when Queen Henrietta Maria, at the head of 3,000 foot, 1,500 horse, beside artillery and waggons, marched from Newark, in June, 1643 (on her progress to meet the king at Edge Hill, then proceeding to Oxford), and was met at Stratford by Prince Rupert, she was conducted to New Place as the most commodious residence fitted to receive her Majesty; and here she sojourned (as we are informed) "about three weeks."

Less direct, but important evidence of the "greatness" of New Place is afforded us by a consideration of the wealth and social position of Sir Hugh Clopton.

This Sir Hugh was a member of the ancient family of Clopton, of Clopton, in the parish of Stratford (Clopton House being about a mile out of Stratford). The family name was derived from the manor, which had been granted to the Cloptons
in

in the reign of Henry III., so that Sir Hugh's ancestors had been men of rank and importance for at least two hundred and fifty years previous to his time. Sir Hugh became alderman of London, and served the office of Lord Mayor in the seventh year of the reign of Henry VII., 1492. His name still lives fresh and green in Stratford; for out of the abundance which he amassed as a wool-stapler in London, he not only adorned his native-place with the "Great House," but he endeavoured to beautify the town itself, and also to benefit it by his charity. In the Guild Chapel of the Holy Cross, adjoining New Place, there is a monument which was erected to his memory at the request of the Corporation of Stratford, by that Sir John Clopton, his descendant, whose marriage with Barbara Walker brought back New Place into the Clopton family.

The

The monument tells us of his “ pious
“ works, so many and so great, that they
“ ought to be had in everlasting remem-
“ brance, especially by this town and parish.”

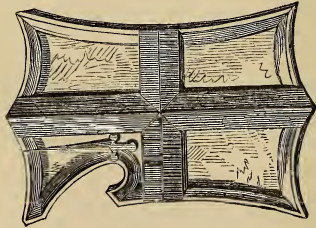
“ He built ye stone bridge over Avon,
“ with ye causey at ye west end ; further
“ manifesting his piety to God and love to
“ this place of his nativity (as ye centurion
“ in ye Gospel did to ye Jewish nation and
“ religion by building them a synagogue),
“ for at his sole charge this beautiful
“ Chappel of ye Holy Trinity was rebuilt,
“ temp. H. VII., and ye cross ile of ye
“ Parish Church.”

The inscription further relates his charities to the poor of Stratford and of London:—£100 to poor housekeepers, 100 marks on their marriage to twenty poor maidens, both in Stratford and London ; making of bridges and highways ; founding exhibitions at Oxford and Cambridge ; leaving money for poor prisoners,
money

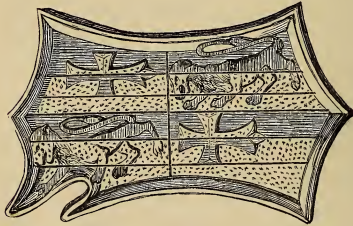
money to hospitals, to the Mercers' Company, and "to ye parson of ye parish "where he lived" (a wholesome custom that has singularly fallen into desuetude). After all legacies and expenses are paid, he leaves the residue of his goods and chattels to "repairing decayed churches," "mending bridges and highways," "maintaining poor children at school," and in portioning "honest maidens."

"This charitable Gent. died a Batcheler, "15th Sept., 1496, and was buried in St. "Margaret's Church, Lothbury."

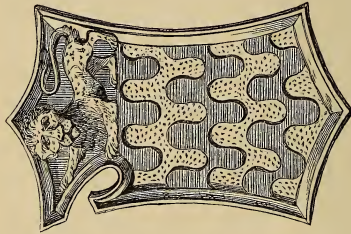
The ancient and beautiful altar-tomb among the Clopton monuments in Stratford Church, without any effigy, but with quatrefoil panels, originally fitted with armorial bearings in brass, is most probably erected to his memory, because it stands on the precise spot where, according to his will, he directed that he should be buried, had he died at Stratford; and
also



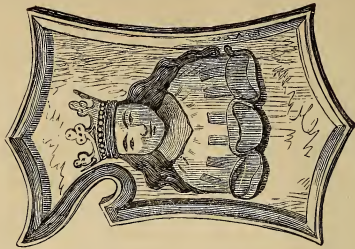
The Arms of London.



*The Arms of
Sir Hugh Clopton, Knight.*



*The Arms of the
Merchants of the Staple.*



*The Arms of the
Mercers' Company.*

(The SHIELDS displayed upon the CANOPY of the ALTAR-TOMB in the CLOPTON CHAPEL,
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON.)

also because the arms carved in the arch above it are those of Sir Hugh, displayed with the arms of the Corporation of London, of which he was Lord Mayor, of the Mercers' Company, and of the Wool Staplers, to all which bodies he belonged.

In corroboration of this probability, which might be pretty safely asserted as fact, any visitor to the Guild Chapel may observe on the face of the porchway, over the arch, a series of shields, in recesses. It has been already shown that this portion of Holy Cross—the nave and porch—were rebuilt by Sir Hugh Clopton. Accordingly, among the shields we find, similar to the shields over the monument in the church, the arms of the City of London, the arms of the Wool Staplers, and the arms of Clopton, *quartered with Cockfield* (Clopton quartering, a Cross patée, fitchée in the foot; Cockfield, a lion rampant).*

The

* Appendix E.

The quarterings agreeing precisely with the display in the “Visitation of Warwickshire,” and therefore somewhat strengthening the assertion of the “Visitation,” that the Cloptons and the Cockfields were *temp.* Edward I. two distinct families, and not that Walter de Cockfield was a Clopton, who assumed the surname of Cockfield, which name continued in use down to the time of Sir Hugh Clopton’s grandfather, *temp.* Richard II., after which it disappeared, and Clopton only was used.

In his Survey of London and Westminster (under the title “Mercers”), Stowe alludes to Sir Hugh, as follows:—

“Sir Hugh Clopton, all his lifetime a
“Bathchelaure, Mayor, 1492, buried at St.
“Margaret’s in Lothbury, 1496. He
“dwelt in Lothbury, where long after
“was the sign of the *Wind-Mill*; and
“where Sir Robert Large, sometime
“Lord

“Lord Maior, had lived before.* This
“man was born at Clopton, in Warwick-
“shire, a mile from Stratford-upon-Avon,
“where he builded a fair stone bridge of
“eighteen arches, and glazed the chancel
” windows

* This Sir Robert Large (Lord Mayor of London in 1439, died 1441), was the Mercer to whom Caxton was apprenticed when he came to London from the Weald of Kent. Stowe shows us that Caxton and Sir Hugh both lived in the same house in Lothbury, and we know they were both members of the Company of Mercers. When we remember that Caxton went over to Ghent and Bruges in the interest of the Mercers' Company, when the wool trade was suffering through the quarrel between England and Philip the Good of Burgundy, and that Sir Hugh Clopton was not only the successor of Sir Robert Large in his house and place of business, but also a distinguished member of the Company of Mercers, it seems almost a certainty that Caxton and Sir Hugh must have been well known to one another; and it is possible, perhaps probable, that by Sir Hugh the first books printed in England, “The Game of Chess,” published 1474, the “Poems of Chaucer,” “Æsop's Fables,” “Reynard the Fox,” and others, would be taken down to his Great House in Stratford, where the wonder and admiration of his neighbours would make the walls echo with the name of Caxton, the introducer of the invention which, in little more than a century later, was to carry forth from that same house the immortal thoughts of him, whose words, winged by Caxton's aid, have flown from pole to pole.

“ windows of the same Parish Church
“ where his arms did stand. Which,
“ as William Smith, sometime Rouge
“ Dragon, hath observed, differed much
“ from the coat set up for him, painted
“ in a target, in the Mercers’ Hall,
“ which indeed was the arms of the
“ Cloptons of Suffolk.”

These facts present to the mind one of England’s worthies, a true Christian gentleman in the fullest and best sense of the phrase. It is a matter of surprise that a man of such excellent parts and character, and so intimately connected with the house and place where Shakespere lived, should be so much overlooked, as he is, by writers upon Stratford and its antiquities.

It is not, however, upon his genuine nobility of character that we have here to dwell; but upon his taste, his love for art, and his delight in architecture. It is something more than a fanciful
idea

idea for us to believe that the taste of Sir Hugh Clopton influenced the mind of Shakespere. Instead of a fancy, this seems to be a fact. The "New Place," which he erected, was destroyed somewhere about 1720, and no representation of it remains to portray it to us; but one piece of building, within a dozen yards of the spot where it stood, is indicative of Sir Hugh's taste. The nave of the Guild Chapel was rebuilt by him, at precisely the same period that Dean Balgall (then Vicar of Stratford), was rebuilding the chancel of the Parish Church, to which it is clear that Sir Hugh generously contributed. Stowe informs us that the perpendicular tracery of the windows in this chancel was filled with stained glass, at the expense of Sir Hugh Clopton, whose arms Dugdale saw emblazoned upon the glass. There can be no difficulty in

in conjecturing what sort of residence "New Place" must have been—how architecturally correct—how excellent in proportion—how artistic in design—how pure in the style and detail of its ornamentation—how deserving of its master's designating it the "Great House" of Stratford, when we refer to his will, and compare its special provisions for the repairing of churches, the building of bridges, the construction of highways, with the work that he did himself accomplish in erecting Stratford Bridge, building the nave of the Holy Cross Chapel, and aiding in the erection of the chancel of the Parish Church. Those portions of the Stratford churches, in which Sir Hugh was interested, are, even amidst the lavish richness of ecclesiastical architecture in Warwickshire, justly reckoned superb specimens of the Perpendicular period.

Of "New Place" Shakespere became
the

the lord and master in 1597. The house was then rather more than one hundred years old. It would need to be "repaired and modelled," particularly as it had belonged to three respective families within the half century before Shakespere purchased it, and had passed out of the Clopton family about a year prior to his birth. Of the repairs that he made, we know nothing; but it is easy to understand how much his mind may have been impressed with the stately beauty of New Place from his earliest childhood. No inhabitant of Stratford, seeing Sir Hugh's "Great House" and the church that he also rebuilt alongside it, could fail to know them and to admire them, much less a boy of Shakespere's observation and appreciative mind. New Place adjoins the Guild Chapel and the Grammar School. There the boy was taught; and day by day, as he went bounding

bounding forth from school, the first object that met his view was Sir Hugh's house, next the church. While yet a child of between three and four years of age, a sale took place. He may, on the very day of the sale, have been holding to his nurse's side, and making his earliest observations upon men and things, as he passed the chapel of Holy Cross, and have seen the family of Underhill arrive to acquire possession of "New Place." All this is perfectly possible; and if this or anything similar occurred, it might impress upon the boy's thoughts that New Place *had been sold!* Might it not again? Who can tell, whether in his early days the boy Shakespere's mind had not been taught by old Sir Hugh's taste to appreciate and admire the beautiful in art; had not been fired with ambition to go to London, as Sir Hugh (the pride of Stratford, and its benefactor) had done, and

and by dint of labour and perseverance to make an independence, and return like him to Stratford, and live honoured and beloved among the townsfolk of his native place? Who can tell whether this same boy may not often and often have stood ruminating under the shadows of the buttresses of Holy Cross, admiringly examining the gables and casements, the porch and antique barge-boards of the "great house," and resolving, should any sale take place there again, if he were a man and had the means, it should have but one master—one, himself possessed of tastes like Sir Hugh's, who would "repair" and preserve the ancestral mansion?

In any biographies of Shakespere or histories of Stratford which may have been written heretofore, New Place has
been

been little more than mentioned. A house was built upon it at such a date, sold at another, purchased by Shakespere at another, and in it he died. No one has ever as yet opened the pages of ancient records to tell us much more about it than that it belonged to the Clopton family, and was built by Sir Hugh Clopton.

The time has perhaps come when it is desirable that the public should become possessed of more particulars concerning it; in fact, when every available information should be produced to relate its history.

That it was Shakespere's dwelling-place is the cause of its interest in public esteem; but that interest will be in no degree decreased if we know something about the associations of the place, and of the family to which it chiefly belonged, especially as that family must have been
well

well known to Shakespere; and members of it, that were his contemporaries, play no obscure part in the history of his times. Whoever he may be that undertakes to give the world a true and sufficient account of New Place must inform his readers concerning the Cloptons of Clopton House, since the history of New Place and its varied fortunes is as closely twined around the Clopton stem as the ivy around the oak.

On the opposite page will be found a pedigree set forth, which has appeared absolutely essential to the accomplishment of the author's purpose. By reference to it the reader will be able to follow him much more easily; and in order to secure perspicuity—as the same names are repeated in several descents—those have been alphabetically labelled to which it seems necessary to direct particular attention.

It

It has been shown (p. 16), that New Place was built in the reign of Henry VII., not later than 1490, by Sir Hugh Clopton, formerly Lord Mayor of London (pedigree AA). Sir Hugh was a younger son of John Clopton, of Clopton — *temp.* Henry VI.,—and being a younger son, both he and his brother John fought their fortunes as merchants of the Staple, in London. Dying a bachelor, Sir Hugh bequeathed his residence of New Place to his elder brother's grandson and heir, William Clopton (AB), in whom accordingly both Clopton House and New Place became vested.

The will of Sir Hugh Clopton, bearing date 14th Sept., 1496, was proved at Lambeth on the 4th day of October in the same year. He describes himself therein as "citezein, mercer, and alderman of London," and desires that if he die in London, or within twenty miles thereof,

thereof, he should be buried in the church of St. Margaret's, Lothbury; but if at Stratford-upon-Avon, to be buried in the parish church there, within the chapel of our Lady, between the altar of the same and the chapel of the Trinity next adjoining, his body to be brought to ground with four torches and four tapers, and no more.

After detailing an agreement with one Dowland and divers other masons about the building of the chapel of the Trinity, and the tower of a steeple to the same, and mentioning his father and mother by name (John and Agnes), there is a disposition of fundry legacies to charitable and religious uses to considerable length; after which bequests to divers individuals; and, finally, entries relative to the devise of his property, in these words:—

Item.

Item.—I will as for my landes and rentes all such is of copy holde that Thomas Clopton the yonger and I be feoffed in remayne holy to hym and to his heires after my decesse for ever and for lak of issue to the right heires of the lordship of Clopton *And to William Clopton I bequeith my great house in Stratford upon Avon and all other my lands and tenements beinge in Wilmecote in the Brigge towne and Stratford with reversion and services and duetes thereunto belonginge remayne to my cousin Wm. Clopton* and for lak of issue of hym to remayne to the right heires of the lordship of Clopton for ever being heires males Also I will that CC marc that Doctor Balsale delyvered me be by the advise and discrecion of my executours employed to the use behoofe and moost profite of the college of Stratford-upon-Avon by the consent and advice of the wardeyn with other sadde prestis and honest men of the towne And all such housing and tenementes as I have within the towne of Caley I will remayn to my cousin Hugh Clopton the elder and also the reversion of the house that I dwell in att London and the termes of the same.

By the *inquisition post mortem* upon *Sir Hugh Clopton*, it appears that he died seised of the following property in Stratford :—

De uno burgagio jacente in *Chapell strete* in Stretford predicta ex opposito capelle ex parte boriali et de uno dimidio burgagio jacente in *Ely strete* alias dicta *Swynne strete* et de uno burgagio in *High strete* et de uno orreo et gardino jacente in *Henley strete* et de uno dimidio burgagio jacente in *Church strete* in Stretford predicta et de duobus toftis quatuor virgatis terre quatuor acris prati et viginti acris pasture cum pertinentijs in *Bryggertowne* in parochia de Stretford Et quod idem Hugo ante obitum suum fuit seisisus in dominico suo ut de feodo de uno tenemento jacente in Stratford predicta in *Rother strete* vocato *Balsals place* et de uno gardino jacente in *Church strete* et de uno tenemento jacente in *High strete* super corneram de le Corne market in quo Johannes Balamy inhabitat et de aleo tenemento in *Chapel strete* buttante super le Corne market in quo Wolfridus Smyth inhabitat in Stretford predicta.*

These documents will show that William Clopton (AB), who had inherited the Clopton estates in 1486, received a
very

* According to this will, it appears that all this property here recited was demised and let to Roger Paget and Elizabeth his wife, for term of life of the said Roger.

very considerable addition to his patrimony by the death—ten years later—of his great uncle, in 1496.

But, together with this accession, he found himself master of two considerable mansions, removed little more than a mile from one another; viz., Clopton House adjoining the town, and New Place within it.

Whether this gentleman kept up both the houses there is no evidence to show; but as we have proof of New Place being let by his son (B), it seems probable that William Clopton (AB) contented himself with the patrimonial residence of Clopton, and set the example which his son followed. Having enjoyed his estate for twenty-five years, he died in 1521, little more being known of him than that for some offence to the Crown he received a pardon from Henry VIII.

By the *inquisition post mortem*, it appears

pears that he was seised of the following property in Stratford, and retained possession of New Place :—

In uno burgagio jacente in strata vocata *Chapel strete* in Stretford super Aven ex parte boriali capelle Sancte Trinitatis in Stratford predicta in comitatu predicto et de uno burgagio jacente in *Chapel strete* predicta uno capite inde abuttante versus Hugonem Raynold ex parte Australi et alio capite inde abuttante versus quandam stratam vocatam *Shepe strete* ex parte Boriali et de uno burgagio jacente in strata vocata *High strete* in Stratford predicta uno capite abuttante versus fundum Magistri Gilde Sancte Trinitatis de Stratford ex parte Boriali et alio capite inde abuttante versus stratam vocatam *Slystrete* ex parte Australi ac de uno burgagio jacente in strata vocata *High strete* in Stretford predicta uno capite inde abuttante versus tenementum Magistri Gilde Sancte Trinitatis predictae ex parte Australi et alio capite inde abuttante versus Willielmum Staffordshire ex parte Boriali Necnon de uno Burgagio jacente in strata vocata *Briggestrete* in Stratford predicta ac eciam de quodam orreo jacente in strata vocata *Henley strete* in Stratford predicta ac de quodam shopa jacente in strata vocata *Wode strete* quam Robertus Gonyatt modo tenet et occupat et de uno burgagio
jacente

jacente in strata vocata *Rother market* in Stretford predicta in quo Deonisia Aylys vidua modo inhabitat ac de uno burgagio jacente in strata vocata *Grenhul strete* in Stretford predicta in quo Nicholaus Norres modo inhabitat necnon de uno burgagio jacente in strata vocata *Church strete* in Stretford predicta &c Necnon de alio burgagio jacente in *Church strete* in Stratford predicta in quo Johannes Ashurste modo inhabitat uno capite inde abuttante versus Episcopum Wigornensis ex parte Occidentali et alio capite inde abuttante versus vicum Regis vocatum *Church strete* ac de duobus gardinis in Stretford predicta abuttantibus versus Johem Hubandys ex parte Boriali et versus dictum Magistrum Gilde predictae ex parte Australi necnon de dimidio burgagio jacente in *Elystrete* in Stratford predicta nunc dimisso et locato pro quodam orreo.

The above William (AB) was succeeded by his son, bearing the same name (B), who lived in possession of the combined estates from 1521 to 1560, at which latter date he died. His will is dated January 4th, and we learn from the inquisition that he expired on the same day at Clopton. The death of this William

Clopton

Clopton (B) brings to light the first fact explanatory of the causes which led to New Place subsequently becoming the property of Shakespere. The will bears the name of "William Bott," one of the attesting witnesses. There are traces of Botts in the register of Stratford, though the author has vainly searched for some mention of this person, whose name is on record as one of the practising solicitors of Stratford at the period.

June 2, 1575.—William, sonne of Robt. Bott (buried).

September 2, 1576.—Sonne to Edward Botte.

July 18, 1588.—Margery, daughter of Ralph Bott, deceased.

January 19, 1591.—Anne Botte, deceased.

The probability is that the Botts were only professionally connected with Stratford, and belonged to some outlying parish or hamlet. However this may be, it is certain that William Bott was a
lawyer

lawyer in practice at Stratford,* and that he was professionally engaged by William Clopton of Clopton (B).

After his death, the inquisition was taken on the 17th day of June, 2nd of Elizabeth (1560), at Warwyck, and the Jurors found that he died feised (inter alia) in his demesne as of fee—

De et in uno tenemento sive burgagio cum pertinentijs in Stratford super Aven in dicto comitatu Warĩ in vico ibidem vocato la Chappell strete modo in tenuta sive occupacione Willielmi Bott.

The same inquisition informs us, that the son and heir William Clopton (C) was at that date “twenty-two years of age.”

In due course of years this William
(C)

* Attorneys of Stratford about that date :—Mr. Thomas Truffell, Mr. William Court, Mr. Edward Davies, Mr. William Bott, Mr. Richard Spooner, Mr. Richard Symmons.

(C) came also to die, as the pedigree shows, in the year 1592.

The Book of Administrations, in an entry regarding the goods of this gentleman, reveals to us not only the business, but also the blood relationship between the Cloptons and the Botts; and thus we receive a complete insight into a transaction that seems singular, regarding which no previous writer has given us any information.

The following extract is most important :—

Octobris, 1597.

Duodecimo die emanavit

WILLIELMUS
CLOPTON.

commissio *Johanni Bott,*

PROXIMO CONSANGUINEO

Willielmi Clopton, nuper

dum vixit de Clopton, in

comitatu Warwici, de-

functi, habentis, &c., ad

administrandum bona, ju-

ra, et credita ejusdem, per

Annam Clopton, ejus relic-

tam, jam defunctam, non

Blasij
Johannis, 1603.

Administratio
Comissa
antea, mense
Maij, 1592.

Johannis,
1605.

administrata,

administrata, de bene, &c.,
 in persona Thome White,
 notarij publici, procurato-
 ris, legitime constituti, ju-
 rate.

Blasij,
 1605.

In what way John Bott happened to be “proximo consanguineo” to William Clopton the author must confess his profound ignorance; for Heralds’ College can give him no relief. No doubt there has been an omission in the pedigree, wherever the link between the Botts and Cloptons occurred; but the above extract places it beyond all question that, in October, 1597, one John Bott, as the nearest of kin in the male line, after the death of Mistress Anne Clopton in 1596, the widow of William, administered the estate, it is to be presumed, as the friend and relative of the Countess of Totness, and Anne Clopton, of Sledwick, her sister, the co-heiresses of the late William Clopton (C).

What

What the connection between John Bott and William Bott was, the author has not discovered. They were probably father and son, or brothers—the latter being the more probable of the two conjectures. That they were close blood relatives is beyond a doubt.

Having dug up these facts, it will not surprise the most ordinary mind to find that William Bott, of Stratford-upon-Avon, solicitor, tenant of New Place, relative, and family lawyer to the Cloptons—witness to the will of a father, and adviser to his successor, aged twenty-two—took an early opportunity of improving upon the chances which fortune had cast in his way.

William Clopton (B) died 1560.

William Clopton, the administration of whose estate subsequently in 1597 is referred to above, (C) succeeded, and in 1563 he was induced to sell New Place to his
his

his late father's tenant, lawyer, and his own blood relative.

The transactions between Bott and William Clopton were considerable, for by the indenture which follows it will be seen that Bott had a knack of gaining possession of land belonging to the Clopton estate.

Indentur^e int^r Willm Clopton et Willm Bott.

This Indenture made the xth daye of Januarye in the syxte yere of the reigne of our souaigne ladye Elizabeth by the grace of God quene of England Fraunce and Irelande defendor of the faith &c betwene Willm Clopton of Clopton in the countye of Warre Esquyer on the one partye and Willm Bott of Stratforde uppon Avon in the said Countye gentleman on the other partye wytnesseth that the said Willm Clopton for and in consederacon of and for dyuse so^mes of money to hym in hande att and before the ensealinge hereof whereof and wherewyth the said Willm Clopton doth acknowledge hym selfe thereof well and trulye satysfied contented and paid and the said Willm Bott his heires executors and administrators thereof clerely acquyted ex^onated and dyschardged

chardged by these pñtes hath gyven and graunted bargayned and solde and by these pñsentes doth clerelye and frelye gyve graunte bargayne and sell to the said Willm̃ Bott all those his three pastures of grounde called the nether Ingon alias Inghton and all that his meadowe called Synder meadowe lyinge and beinge in nether Ingon alias Inghton in the paryshe of Bisshopps Hampton in the said Countye of Warẽ nowe or late in the tenure or occupaõ of Rycharde Charnocke and Willm̃ Baylyes of Welon and the assignes of the said Rycharde Charnocke and all that his wyndemyll foure yardes of errable land and twentye and nyne leys scituate lyinge and beyng in the Feildes of olde Stratforde and in the home nexte adioyninge to the said feildes and all that his meadowe lyinge in Shotterye meydowe nowe or late in the occupaõ of John Combes and John Lewys alias Atkyns To have and to holde the said pastures meadowes wyndemylls lande and leys and all and singuler there apptenaunces to the said Willm̃ Bott his heires and assignes for eũmore to the onlye use and behoufe of the said Willm̃ Bott his heires and assignes for ever And also the said Willm̃ Clopton hath bargayned & solde by these pñsentes all and all maner of evidences dedes wrytinges chers and mynymentes that be touchynge and concnyng onlye the pñmisses or any parte or parcell of them and the said evidences dedes wrytinges chers and mynymentes the said Willm̃ Clopton couenaunteth and
graunteth

graunteth by these p̄sentes to and wyth the said Willm̄ Bott his executors or assignes to delyuer or cause to be delyuēd to hym the said Willm̄ Bott his executors or assignes before the feaste of Easter next ensuinge the date herecf and furthermore the said Willm̄ Clopton for him his heires executors and administrators couenaunteth and graunteth by these p̄sentes to and wyth the said Willm̄ Bott that he the said Willm̄ Clopton shall before the feaste of Easter make or cause to be made to the said Willm̄ Bott his heires or assignes a good suer suffycyente lafull and indefycible estate in the lawe in fee symple of and in the said pastures meadowes leyes of pasture wyndemyll and errable lande wyth all and singuler there apptenaunces be yt by fyne feoffament dede or dedes inrolled release confirmaçon recoūye wyth voucher or vouchers wyth warrantye agaynste all men or wyth out warrantye as cane and shalbe deuysed or aduised by the learned councell of the said Willm̄ Bott his heires or assignes and furthermore the said Willm̄ Clopton for hym his heires executors and administrators couenaunteth and graunteth by these p̄sentes to and wyth the said Willm̄ Bott his executors and administrators that the said pastures meadowe wyndemyll and errable lande att the daye of the date hereof be clerelye dyscharged of all and from all former bargaynes sales dowres ioyntors leases statutes m̄chaunte and of the staple Recognisances iudgementes fynes am̄cyamentes condempnaçons
and

and all other chardges and incomberances whatsoever they be the rentes and ſuices to the cheife lorde or lordes of the fee from hensforth dewe and accustomed to be paide onely excepted and also the ſaid Willm Clopton for hym his heires executors and administrators couenaunteth and graunteth by theſe preſentes to and wyth the ſaid Willm Bott his heires executors and administrators that he the ſaid Willm Clopton and Anne his wyffe ſhall before the fourthe daye of Maye nexte ensuinge the date hereof knowledge a fyne before one of the quenes maiestyes iuſtyces of the Kinges benche or comon place to be levyed before the Quenes Juſtices at Weſtm^ſ of and for the ſaid pastures meadowe wyndemyll leyes of pasture and errable lande wyth all and ſinguler there app^tenaunces and also the ſaid Willm Clopton for hym his heires executors and administrators couenanteth and graunteth by theſe preſentes to and wyth the ſaid Willm Bott his heires executors and assignes that he the ſaid Willm Clopton and his heires ſhall att all tymes hereafter and from tyme to tyme when and as often as he or they ſhalbe thereunto reasonablye required by the ſaid Willm Bott his heires or assignes doo ſuffer and cauſe to be done and ſuffered all and eu^y ſuche further acte and actes thinge and thinges as ſhalbe reasonablye required by the learned counsell of the ſaid Willm Bott his heires or assignes for the further assurance and ſuer makinge of the premisses to the ſaid Willm Bott his heires or assignes for
euermore

euermore In wytnesse whereof eyther party to these p̄sente Indentures in̄chaungeably have putto there seales the daye and yere firste above wrytten Et memorand̄ qđ ꝑcio die Aprilis anno Sup̄script̄ p̄dcūs Will̄s Clopton venit coram d̄ca d̄ña Regina in Cancellarī sua apud Westm̄ et recognouit Indentū p̄dcām et oīnia et singula in eadem content̄ et sp̄ificat̄ in forma sup̄dict̄.

January, in the 6th of Eliz., would be 1563-4—three months before Shakespere was born. Upon the authority of Wheler, the author has assumed that the sale of New Place occurred the year previous (1563). Wheler is commonly most accurate, and the above sale gives weight to his assertion, because it proves that Bott was at that time making purchases from William Clopton. The *Fines* of 1563 are silent, though it must be observed that there is a total absence of all *Fines* in the Record Office for Michaelmas Term of that year ; which is to be accounted for by the fact that the plague was raging

raging. It is most probable that the sale took place at that time; and that the late Mr. Wheler had met with some private trace of it for which the author has fruitlessly searched among public papers.

That William Bott purchased New Place upon speculation appears most probable, because it only remained in his possession for the period of four years. The *Fines*, Michaelmas Term, 9th Eliz., show us that the sale by Bott to Underhill took place at that date.

Warř 1567.

Hec est finalis concordia fċa in Cuř Dñe Regine apud Westm̃ in crastino Sċi Martini anno regnoř Elizabeth dei grā Angġ Franċ et Hibnie Regine fidei defensoris &c a conqũ nono coram Jacobo Dyer Riċo Weston Johe Walshe & Riċo Harpur Justiċ et alijs dñe Regine fidelibz tunc ibi p̃sentibz in? Willm̃ Underehyll queř et Willm̃ Botte et Elizabeth uxem eius et Albanũ Hetoñ deforċ de uno mesuagio et uno gardino cum ptiñ in Stretford sup Aven unde p̃litum convenċois suñ fuit

fuit in^o eos in eadē Cur scilicet qđ pđci Willm̃s Botte et Elizabeth et Albanus recogn pđct teñ cum ptiñ esse jus ipius Willm̃i Underehyll ut ist que idem Willm̃s het de dono pđcoř Willm̃i Botte et Elizabeth et Albani Et ist remiser et quiet^o clañ de ipis Willm̃o Botte et Elizabeth et Albano et hered suis pđco Willm̃o Underehyll et hered suis imp̃pm Et pterea idem Willm̃s Botte concessit p se et hered suis qđ ipi warant pđco Willm̃o Underehyll et hered suis pdict teñ cum ptiñ cont^a pđcm Willm̃ Botte et hered suos imp̃pm Et ultius idem Albanus concessit p se et hered suis qđ ipi warant pđco Willm̃o Underehyll et hered suis pdict teñ cum ptiñ cont^a pđcm Albanũ et hered suos imp̃pm Et insup ijdem Willm̃s Botte et Elizabeth concesser p se et hered ipius Elizabeth qđ ipi warant pđco Willm̃o Underehyll et hered suis pđca teñ cum ptiñ cont^a pđcam Elizabeth et hered suos imp̃pm Et p hac recogn remissione quietaclañ warant fine et concordia idem Willm̃s Underehyll dedit pđcis Willm̃o Botte et Elizabeth et Albano quadraginta libras sterlingoř.

[Endorsed are the proclamations secundum formam statuti.]

By this sale New Place was rescued from the hands of a grasping lawyer, and passed into the possession of a family long connected

Underhill = daugh. of S
Staff., Esq. of Bromw

= daugh. of — Batt
of Long Compton, co. W

1st. d. of Slade Walse =
of Wol of Marstoke.

William Underhill,
son and heir. Ob. s. p.
Left his estate to his brother
Edward.

Underhill = Margaret,
of Eatington d. of — M
in 1541. Edgebaste

Humphrey. John. Thomas Underhill. (A) William Underhill
of Eatin Ob. Oct. 6, of Idlicote and Loxl
Ob. March 31, 157
Buried at Eatingt

Sir Edward Underhill. 13
Ob. 13 Nov. 1641.
Ex quo. the senior branch.

(B) Shirley. B
m Underhill
icote, Esq. Born Sept. 1555.
d July 13, 1597. Described in
Will dated July 6, 1597.

Fulke Underhill.
Bapt. Jan. 28, 1578.
Ob. March 1, 1598. s. p.

hill = Bridget,
ton, d. of John, Lord
like. Carleton.

(C) t. Alice, = Sir William U
Lucy of of Idlicote,
Knt. Buried Sept. 2

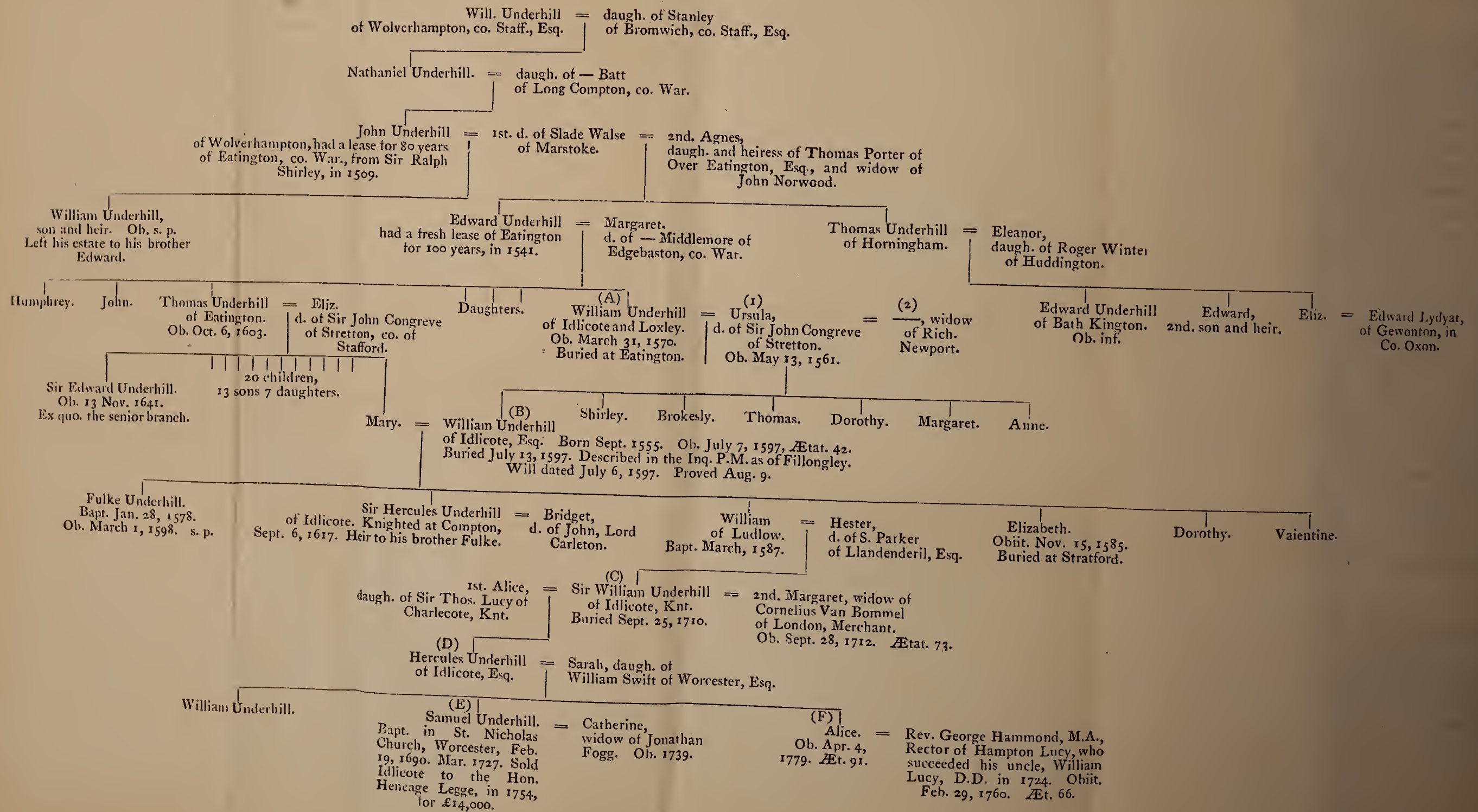
Underhill = Sarah, daugh. c
e, Esq. William Swift

William Underhill. = Catherine,
Nicholas widow of Jo
ster, Feb. Fogg. Ob.
1727. Sold
the Hon.
e, in 1754,
ooo.

connected with Easington, and Idlicote, near Shipston-upon-Stour. The Underhills, as the abstract of pedigree herewith given shows, were originally a Staffordshire family, and settled at Easington, a few miles from Stratford, on property belonging to the Shirleys.* The younger son of Edward Underhill purchased the estate of Idlicote, a short distance from Easington, in the 10th year of the reign of Elizabeth (1568), from Ludovic Greville, and so established the junior branch of the Underhills as a family in Warwickshire. This William (marked A on the pedigree) had a son, also named William (marked B), who married his first cousin, Mary, of Easington. His sons, Sir Hercules and William, were staunch and loyal supporters of the cause of Charles I., and were compelled to redeem

* Appendix F.

UNDERHILL PEDIGREE.



redeem their estate from the Republicans for £1,177 8s. 6d.

William Underhill (B) was the person by whom the purchase of New Place was made. By referring to the will of his father (in the Appendix G) it is evident that the Underhills possessed property in Stratford-upon-Avon; and therefore the purchase of New Place by William Underhill is readily understood. His name is repeatedly found among the fines levied about the years 1570 to 1590,* proving that he was anxious to accumulate as much landed property as he could in the neighbourhood of Stratford-upon-Avon; in fact, that he was ambitious to establish the younger branch of the Underhills at Idlicote in as great affluence as the senior branch at Easington. It was an ambition destined

* Appendix G.

destined to be disappointed in the person of his grandson (C), who having married Alice, the daughter of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, had the misfortune to become a widower, and then to become enamoured of a widow, the relict of one Van Bommel, a rich Dutch merchant in London. This lady estranged Sir William from rural life, led him to London, and drew him into commercial speculation. He embarked in the gunpowder trade; the mills were blown up, and the property blown to the winds at the same time. His son, Hercules (D), was involved, along with his father, and the result was, that in 1754 the estate was sold to the Hon. Heneage Legge, by the grandson Samuel (E), whose sister Alice (F) was allied with the family of the Lucys of Charlecote, having married the Rev. George Hammond, Rector of Hampton Lucy, who succeeded his uncle, William Lucy

Lucy, D.D., in the rectory, 1724. A monument to the memory of Mr. Hammond, and Alice Underhill, his wife, may be seen in the vestry of the modernly rebuilt church of Hampton Lucy; the apsidal east end of which, lately added by the present owner of Charlecote, aided by the genius of Mr. Gilbert Scott, has transformed this church into a sort of small cathedral; and, in the midst of the beauties and associations of Hampton Lucy and Charlecote, has furnished the lovers of architecture with a central object upon which the eye rests with gratitude to the liberality and taste of the present master of Charlecote.

From 1567 to 1597 William Underhill continued the proprietor of New Place.* It is vain at this remote date to speculate upon the causes which led to
Shakespeare's

* Appendix H.

Shakespere's purchase of New Place. Certainly there was no necessity for William Underhill to sell any portion of his property. On the contrary, we have the best proof that he had the desire and ability to increase his landed estate; and we can estimate its value when we recall the fact before stated, that his son, Sir Hercules, during the Civil War was glad to compound for it, by paying down £1,177. There is one fact concerning the sale of New Place which is worth noting. It was sold to Shakespere in the Easter Term of 1597; and Underhill was himself dead and buried July 13th of the same year.

This fact rather favours the idea that New Place was sold from some private or personal motive to Shakespere; for it most certainly was not sold as a business transaction. William Underhill is known to us as an accumulator of landed property

perty, not as a man who had any necessity to part with a single acre of his estate. It is probable that Shakespere was acquainted with the Underhills, and it may be that William Underhill was aware of the Poet's desire to possess himself of the property at New Place. New Place would not be a residence at which Fulk, or Hercules—the future Sir Hercules, Royalist, and favourite of King Charles—would be ever likely to reside, particularly as Idlicote itself was so contiguous to Stratford. It will be seen by the pedigree that Fulk died the year after his father, and the inheritance passed to his brother Hercules, a minor. Had Fulk Underhill died the year before his father's death, a reason for the sale of New Place would have been supplied us. As it is, the probabilities are strongly in favour of the belief that Shakespere was personally intimate with the Underhill family

family; and both Fulk and Hercules, youths of about seventeen and nineteen years of age, were possibly anxious that before their father died, the Poet and actor should be gratified in his wish, and New Place secured to him. The facts, however, are these: in Easter Term, 1597, the sale was effected, and on the 13th of July, William Underhill was buried. The preceding documents the author believes have never before been published; the following was discovered by Mr. Halliwell:—

Pasch. 39 Eliz.

Inter Willielmum Shakespeare queñ et Willielmum Underhill, generosum deforç, de uno mesuagio, duobus horreis, et duobus gardinis, cum pertinentijs, in Stratford super Avon, unde placitum convencionis suñ, fuit inter eos, &c. scilicet quod predictus Willielmus Underhill recogñ, predicta tenementa cum pertinentijs esse jus ipsius Willielmi Shakespeare ut illa que idem Willielmus habet de dono predicti Willielmus Underhill, et iñ remisit et quietclam de se et hereð

hered̃ suis predicto Willielmo Shakespeare et hered̃ suis in perpetuum ; et preterea idem Willielmus Underhill concessit pro se et hered̃ suis quod ipsi warant̃ predicto Willielmo Shakespeare et hered̃ suis predicta tenementa cum pertinentijs in perpetuum. Et pro hac &c. idem Willielmus Shakespeare dedit predicto Willielmo Underhill sexaginta libras sterlingorum.

In glancing over these dry legal papers, unearthed from the charnel-house of history, we are brought into contact with the acts of men, whose lives would be unknown had they not been preserved from oblivion by the embalming law. Shakespere's acquaintances, neighbours, perhaps friends, are brought before us in such documents, and in the registers of parish churches. These, and their tombstones, are almost our only sources of information concerning the men and women who were of note and consequence in and about Stratford, who must have been familiar with the Poet, and
who

who might, by the labour of a few hours, have left us records of him which would have made the world grateful through all its hours to come.

Let us be thankful, however, for possessing records that do survive the destruction of time; and accepting them, if we cannot re-people the past, at least we can catch a glimpse here and there of forms familiar to the Poet both before and during his New Place life.

Among the Special Commissions taken for the county of Warwick, now preserved in the Record Office, is an inquisition upon the estate of Ambrose, Earl of Warwick, dated 32 Eliz. (1591). The document is very lengthy, and one of very great interest. Some years back, attention was drawn to it by Mr. Cole, but as yet no antiquary has been found having a publisher of sufficient spirit to risk its publication.

The

The following epitome of such portions as serve the object of the author will be read with interest. Among the commissioners will be observed the name of Charles Hales, to which the attention of the reader is especially directed, for reasons which will appear hereafter.

Special Commissions (Co. Warwick) *temp.* Eliz.

Inquisitio capta apud Warwic⁹ et Stratford super Avon sexto die Octobris anno regni domine nostre Elizabethe Dei Gracia Anglie Francie et Hibernie Regine fidei defensoris &c tricesimo secundo coram Fulcone Grevile milite Thoma Leygh milite Johanne Puckeringe armigeris servientibus dicte domine Regine ad legem, Thome Dabridgcourt armigero, et Carolo Hales armigero, virtute Commissionis dicte domine Regine extra Scaccarium nobis et alijs directe ad inquirendum et superviendum de omnibus et singulis manerijs terris tenementis et hereditamentis in comitate predicto nuper Ambrosij comitis Warwicensis Et de quibusdam articulis eidem Commissioni annexis per sacramentum Johis Turner generosi Richardi Woodward generosi Radulphi Townesend generosi Johannis Fulwood generosi Humfridi Brace Radulphi Lorde Willielmi Wyatt Johannis Sadler Ricardi

Ricardi Walford Georgij Frauncis Thome Nosor
 Willielmi Harbage Georgij Gybbes Willielmi
 Taylor Thome Warde Johannis Collins THOME
 SHACKESPERE Johannis Barrett Thome Goddard
 Richardi Masters Willielmi Lapworth Thome
 Preyst Ricardi Williams et Roberti Farefax qui
 dicunt ut sequitur

* * * *

MANERIUM DE NOVO STRATFORD

Burgus sive villa de Stratford super Avon cum
 membris in comitatu Warr⁹.

* * * *

Smythe strete

THOMAS SHACKESPERE tenet per copiam datam
 xxj die Julij anno xxvij regine Elizabethe unam
 croftam terre ad edificandum horreum ibidem
 continentem per estimacionem dimidiam acram
 terre vocatam Pookecrofte et unum gardinum
 cum pertinentijs pro termino quinquaginta an-
 norum et reddit per annum iiij^s viij^d

* * * *

Vicus vocatus Henley strete

JOHANNES SHACKESPERE tenet libere unum
 tenementum cum pertinentijs per redditum per
 annum vj^d sectam curie vj^d

Idem JOHANNES tenet libere unum tenemen-
 tum per redditum per annum xij^d sectam
 curie xij^d

Vicus

Vicus vocatus le Corne strete et Churche strete

WILLIELMUS UNDERHILL GENEROSUS TENET LIBERE QUANDAM DOMUM VOCATAM THE NEWE PLACE CUM PERTINENTIJS PER REDDITUM PER ANNUM xij^d SECTAM CURIE xij^d

[*Note*—W^m Underhill held also in “Walkers strete unum horreum &^c”]

Manerium de Shotterye reddit customar⁹ tenen⁹
a Shotterie

JOHANNA HATHEWAY vid tenet per copiam unum messuagium et duas virgatas terre et dimidiam cum pertinentijs per redditum per annum xxxiij iiij^d finem et harriotam . xxxiijs iijs^d

Manerium de Rowington cum membris customarij tenentes per copiam curie

THOMAS SHACKESPERE tenet per copiam sibi et heredibus suis unum croftum cum pertinentijs per redditum per annum ijs^s ad festa predicta equaliter finem, heriotam, sectam curie . . ijs^s

Liberi Tenentes

THOMAS SHACKESPERE tenet libere unum messuagium et unam virgatam terre cum pertinentijs per redditum per annum &c x^s x^d

Wood end

RICARDUS SHACKSPERE tenet per copiam ut
supra

supra unum cottagium et dimidiam virgatam
terre et unam acram prati cum pertinentijs per
redditum per annum ad festa predicta equaliter
vj^s x^d finem et sectam curie vj^s x^d

Mulsowe ende

THOMAS SHACKESPERE tenet per copiam ut
supra unum mesuagium et unam virgatam terre
cum pertinentijs per redditum per annum ad
festa predicta equaliter x^s iiij^d finem et harriot-
tam, cum accederit, et sectam curie . . . x^s iiij^d

GEORGIUS SHACKESPERE tenet per copiam ut
supra unum cottagium et unum croftum terre
cum pertinentijs per redditum per annum ad
festa predicta equaliter ij^s finem et sectam curie ij^s

RICARDUS SHACKESPERE tenet per copiam ut
supra unum mesuagium et dimidiam virgatam
terre et duas parcelas prati cum pertinentijs
per redditum per annum ad festa predicta equ-
aliter xiiij^s finem et harriotam cum accederit xiiij^s

At the period of the above inquisition
being held, Shakespere was twenty-eight
years of age. In a small town like Strat-
ford it seems that his family had in-
dustriously

“Scattered his Maker’s image o’er the land.”

There

There was a plentiful supply both of Shakespeares and Hathaways in and about Stratford, not only at that date, but for many years previous. The registers and records of Rowington and neighbouring parishes have yielded their evidences to this procreative truth; but the author believes the following quotations from a Muster Roll of the 28th Henry VIII. (1537), have not previously been published:—

Warwyke.

The certyficathe of George Throkmerton knyght. John Grevyle Fulke Grevyle Edward Conwey Esquiers and Antony Skynner gent Comysioners of our souerayne lorde the kings conserninge musters to be taken in the hundred of Barlychwey and libertye of Pathloe in the countye of Warwyke accordinge to the kinges highnes co^mmission to them directed doe certyfie unto your lordships as well the names and surnames of all abell men withine the hundred and libertye aforesaid as horses harnes bowes arows billys and other thinges defensabell and mete for the warre with the diversitie therof whiche ar in every township
of

of the said hundred and libertye that ys to
saye

	*	*	*	*
ROWINGTON			Able men ther	
		*	*	
(<i>Inter alios</i>)		Thomas Shakespere	} Arch[er]	
		*		
		Ric : Shakespere		
	*	*	*	
WRAXSALL			Able men ther	
		*	*	
(<i>Inter alios</i>)		Will ^m Sakespere	} Arch[er]	
		*		
		Ric : Shakespere		
	*	*	*	
SHOTERY			Abell men there	
			John Hathewey	} Arch[er]
LOXLEY			Abell men ther	
			Matthew Hathewey	} Arch[er]

It will have been observed that William Underhill's father (A), the founder of the Idlicote family, was possessed of an estate at Loxley, a hamlet about three miles from Stratford. In this place also
the

the Hathaways flourished, for in the will office at Worcester the author found the following entries:—

- 1541. Hathaway, Thomas . . Loxley.
- 1557. Hathway, Simon . . . Loxley.
- 1558. Hatheway, Joan . . . Loxley.
- 1617. Hathway, John Loxley.
- 1636. Hathway, Richard . . Stratford.
- 1637. Hathway, Richard . . Stratford.
- 1648. Hathaway, Andrew . . Bellbroughton.

Now, although William Underhill (B), the possessor of New Place, had his chief residence at Idlicote, it seems probable that New Place was a favourite town-house with him; and equally probable that it was purchased as a residence for him during his father's lifetime, as the sale was effected by his father, three years prior to his death. That death may have occurred much more suddenly than was ever anticipated; and after his father was laid to rest in Easington church, William Underhill (B) may have been
unwilling

unwilling to retire entirely from a residence that had only been prepared for his reception three years previously. His social rank and position are sufficiently indicated by the preceding inquisition, wherein he is styled "generosus;" and the author's reason for believing that this "William Underhill—generosus" (though actually seated at Idlicote) always kept up his town house in Stratford, and occasionally stayed there, although never making it a fixed residence, is drawn from the fact, that while the history of the family is to be read in the registers at Easington, and the registers of Stratford are almost silent, it does so happen that the author has found one baptismal entry at Stratford, as follows:—

November 25, 1585.—Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. William Undrell.

The natural inference drawn from this entry being, that during the winter months

months of 1585, the Underhill family removed from Idlicote to their Stratford house, at which place it chanced that one of the children was born. We gather from these various documents that both at Loxley and in Stratford, William Underhill of New Place was furrounded by Shakesperes and Hathaways. They must have been familiarly known to him, and he to them; for although there was a broad line of social demarcation between the yeomen and able-bodied "archers," and the "generosus" master of New Place, still we must remember in the case of John Shakespere and his son there would not be such a separation, because John Shakespere had attained a position in the town sufficiently respectable to allow of a friendly intimacy existing between the Underhills and his branch of the Shakespere family.

From his childhood in 1567 until 1597
Shakespere

Shakespere would know William Underhill, Gent., as the owner of New Place.

That he must have known him socially, and that Underhill must have had some private and friendly motive in selling New Place to Shakespere, almost upon his death-bed, is a conclusion which the date and circumstances of the sale seem to force upon us. But Shakespere we know was intimately acquainted with John à Combe, of the "College," and in his will left his sword to Thomas Combe. What of that ?

The question will be answered with the same explanation which the author would give to the companion question, which we can well believe many time-worn lovers of Shakespere will be inclined to ask : "Why do you burden your book
"with a set of elaborate pedigrees which
"no one has given before, and the use of
"which is not obvious now ?"

Let

Let such questions receive this answer. Because the writer believes, honestly and earnestly, that much more fact, and infinitely more probability, concerning Shakespere's life, lies within our reach than is commonly supposed. Heraldry and pedigrees may seem to some persons very dry study; but it may safely be asserted that, despite the flippant jokes of modern democratic writers at the expense of the Herald's Tabard, and the mediæval, quaint associations of the College of Arms, that institution, the Books of Visitations, and the heraldic displays upon ancient church monuments, are becoming daily more and more valuable as contributors to the history of our country. However humorous it may seem to see the *novus homo* of Pie Corner or Pudding Lane assuming a crest to which he has not the remotest pretension, and can show no claim, nevertheless in
the

the very assumption there is the indication of an Englishman's reverence and regard for the ancient landmarks of family and social history.

What does it matter to any one if the inventor of the latest Delectable Soap or patentee of the Bifurcating-Baltic-Bristle-Brush, drops in at one of those terrific Holborn shops, which look like mediæval menageries for the exhibition of crimson griffins and uproarious gamboge lions; and there, for the small charge of 5s., has his "arms found?" What though the brindle cat sits and mews a-top his note-paper, curls its tail upon the flap of his envelopes, and spreads its whiskers over the handles of his spoons? Do Garter or Clarenceux lose their appetites because the vaulting ambition of the shop has a sneaking love for these things, and pays for it in the Queen's taxes, with hair-powder and such like?

Not

Not a jot. They know well enough that the honest citizen would have found his arms at Doctors' Commons if he could ; and that, please God and his own industry, if he can found a family, some day or another the brindled cat may have its turn in that direction ! Though the cynic may smile and sneer at such cockney pretension, and though it has a ludicrous aspect, nevertheless it is not all ludicrous. There is something genuinely English at the foundation. There is an evidence of the spirit of homage to antiquity ; of reverence for even the humblest association with anything connected with the records of the country.

As all forms, ecclesiastical or civil, have their meaning and their moral, so the forms of heraldry—the quaintest of all—are full of the deepest meaning and interest. Let the present writer make bold to say that a most intensely interesting book might be,
may

may, perhaps, be yet written regarding Shakespere, by collecting together a record of the persons and the incidents of those persons' lives with whom the Poet must of necessity have been associated. These pages cannot be devoted to such an undertaking; and, therefore, there will be no further attempt made in them than to indicate the direction in which it seems well that some one should travel.

It is by no means impossible to surround Shakespere with friends and acquaintances, concerning whom the world generally knows nothing up to the present time.

What is the common estimate of him and of his associates? Vulgarity is stamped upon the traditional stories regarding his life and society. We are told he was apprenticed to a butcher. He was a deer-stealer. He married a woman in a hurry,

hurry, for a reason about which the less said the better. He lived unhappily with his wife, and as an evidence of his indifference, left her his second-best bed. Last of all, he died of a fever, caught from a bout of drunkenness. Poor Shakespeare!

Can any one show that there is a syllable of truth in any of these stories? Do such low-bred vulgarity, immorality, and beastiality, suit with the mind of William Shakespeare?

Has he not in his own words supplied for us the vixen-like revenge which littleness, and the worst littleness of all, that of gossips, takes upon any real greatness of mind and character:—"I'll give thee
"this plague for thy dowry; be thou as
"chaste as ice, as pure as snow, thou
"shalt not escape calumny."

Whence do all these stories about our Poet come? Plain, vulgar-tongued folk
call

call them—gossip. When ventilated in a superior atmosphere, and carried with the beefs and muttens from the scullery to the dinner-table, the word dissolves into the politer phrase—tradition. Be it so ! But what is Tradition ? Tradition is not to be believed ; but always to be considered. Tradition is a perjured witness, who never yet came into court without a lie upon her tongue—for it is a lie to pervert, distort, exaggerate, or diminish aught of the truth ; and where, either in the memory of man, or on the pages of history, was there ever a piece of “ gossip,” “ town’s talk,” “ what everybody says,” “ tradition,” that did not, on investigation, turn out to be gorged with falsehood ?

The stories current concerning Shakespeare, which the lapse of ages has consecrated with the undeserved title of tradition, might well astonish any stranger to
English

English habits; but they are not in the smallest degree astonishing, when we remember that it is one of the manners and customs of the English to try to knock a man over, the moment he lifts his head above the herd of his fellow-men. If by abuse and slander we can blight his spirit, dull his brain, and break his heart, we give God thanks for having accomplished a worthy, Christian, and charitable end. But if he stands the pelting, and wont be put down, there is a time coming when he can be cuffed and cudgelled to any extent. For your genuine lover of slander—the vampire of private life—the greatest treat on earth is the “post-mortem” of a man’s character, whom he has followed with envy, hatred, and malice through life. There are Cannibals, even in England, who want a gospel preaching to them far more than their heathen brethren; for
while

while the latter whoop and dance around the dead, and then eat the perishing flesh, the former exultingly leap upon, and until they are sick with surfeit, devour the more than body—the reputation, the life in death, of those who lie defenceless in the grave.

There is no need to be surprised that even mighty Shakespere's memory has been handed down to us blackened and defamed by gossip. In inverse ratio, the higher a man attains, the lower and baser he is likely to be represented. An unerring gauge whereby to measure the value of character and genius against gossip, in the case of Shakespere, is here supplied.

The story—which will hereafter be referred to—regarding the causes which led to Shakespere's death, is generally familiar, and has, as a matter of course, been commonly reported in Stratford. In order to show

show how gossip—otherwise tradition—improves as she passes from mouth to mouth, the author lately encountered the statement, gravely made to him by a clergyman at Luddington, who had been assured of its truth, that “Shakespeare died drunk.” That assertion will read to every one as wicked and preposterous as it sounded in the ears of the writer. But why wicked and preposterous? It is the natural result, and inevitable development of the story told in the Rev. Mr. Ward’s Diary, which need not be further discussed in this place. This piece of gossip of 1862, the author believes precisely to the same extent that he does any and all of the before-mentioned stories. They all rest upon one basis, and that basis is a rotten one.

A very clever, and, in its way, a very convincing pamphlet, was published a
short

short time back, by Charles Holte Bracebridge, Esq., entitled "Shakespeare no "Deerstealer," the gift of which is, that Shakespere did not kill the deer in Charlecote at all, but in Fulbroke Park; that in so doing he committed no offence against the law, or morals, but that he offended Sir Thomas Lucy thereby. Mr. Bracebridge quotes the statement of the late Mr. Lucy to Sir Walter Scott, that "the park from which Shakespere stole "the buck was not that which furrounds "Charlecote."

Mr. Bracebridge's pamphlet is well worth reading, and he has done good service by it to the memory of the Poet.

Now as to the value of tradition. Though tradition invariably speaks falsely, as in one instance Mr. Bracebridge has shown, nevertheless, though a wretched bad witness in court to give evidence, she serves as a very useful sign-post upon the
the

the highways of time. She commonly (not always) points to something that deserves inquiring into, and indicates the direction in which we shall find it worth our while to travel. So with regard to the traditions about Shakespere: the author believes they are a mixture of absurdity and of falsehood; but at the same time, while rejecting them as at all trustworthy, they seem to him to serve a useful purpose in exciting inquiry, and making us seek for the truth that underlies them. As evil is commonly good perverted, so falsehood is often the wicked or idle misrepresentation of something true at bottom; and as good as it is true.

Let any one of the so-called traditions concerning Shakespere be brought into court, and searchingly examined, and it will be committed for perjury.

But let us take the rambling old ter-
centenarian

centenarian crone at her real value; go and sit with her in her timber and plaster cottage at Stratford, and listen to her as she told her story to Betterton, or to Ward, or in her later years to Malone or Stevens, and we shall thank her, not for what she teaches us, but for sending us off in the right direction in pursuit of something we have yet to learn.

There is Mr. John Shakespere, in Henley Street—he is a glover, or a butcher, or a “yeoman,” or wool-dealer!—what is he? Can no one sum up all the supposed trades or businesses, and say in a word, that they most probably mean he was a woolstapler? Make him of any one of the above trades actually and solely, and we cannot reconcile the other statements.

But like the variorum readings of the same names and the same employments in Shakespere’s days, if we
adopt

adopt the conclusion that he was a Merchant of the Staple, we shall easily be able to understand his being called both butcher and glover. Considering what a staple trade gloving was in John Shakespere's time, in his own county, if he were connected with the mercers in London, he would of necessity deal in gloves. The possessor of land, and the owner of cattle, it is the height of probability that he may have slaughtered his sheep in his own farm-yard, in order to have the skins properly preserved. Butcher he might easily be called, and so might his son William; and also be represented as apprenticed to a butcher, when he was in reality apprenticed to his father.

So, again, the story about Shakespere killing an animal, or helping to kill one, may be true in origin, but tradition's representation of it be as untrue, as if one of our princes or peers were nominated

nated a "butcher" because he happened to be present when a stag's throat was cut.

And so, again, there is the deer story. Mr. Bracebridge may be right as far as he goes; and yet, while tradition points to some fact that did occur, he might perhaps, though wanting evidence, and yet in truth, have gone much further. Might not Shakespere have been out, not merely for sport, but as a matter of business? Might not his father have regularly killed, and paid for deer out of Fulbroke Park? Might not the quarrel with Sir Thomas Lucy have arisen upon this ground; and an imperious, hot-headed country squire have attempted to interfere with Shakespere, thereby making himself ridiculous, and henceforward becoming famous in his folly?

Again, as regards Shakespere's removal to London. May not that have happened

pened for business motives? and may he not, during his whole London career, have benefited by a profitable trade, that gave him the position of a gentleman, and connected him with gentlemen? and also enabled him to realise that independence upon which he retired? It must never be forgotten that his father was in difficulties about the time when the Poet removed to the metropolis; and from that moment we never again hear of, or trace any domestic anxieties in the house of John Shakespeare. The inference seems conclusive.

Look at Shakespeare, in his home-life at Stratford: is he not continually engaged in commercial transactions—buying and selling corn, buying land, farms, tythes? Shakespeare was a busy man—an active, thrifty, accumulative man. He was evidently anxious to make money, and to found a family. His will, and the
records

records of Heralds' College, in his father's grant of arms, prove this.

When he became more permanently resident at Stratford, we find him exhibiting the habits of life previously contracted. Men's habits are not changed in mid-life, and new ones assumed. What Shakespere was at Stratford we have every reason to suppose he was in London; but whatever the sources of his accumulations, whether from one or various sources—the stage, his plays, and commercial enterprises—we *know* that he did make money; and that at a very early time of life he was able to establish himself and family in New Place. So far from the vulgar, baseless conjecture, that Shakespere ran off to London to avoid Sir Thomas Lucy having anything to recommend it, it seems to the author as far-fetched and preposterous, as it is totally devoid of a scintilla of evidence in its favour.

Why

Why should we delight in perpetuating such miserable fudge? Why should one writer after another, and one generation after another, pass on, from book to book, and from mouth to mouth, a set of stories that would be (divested of the grand-sounding epithet "tradition," and branded with their proper designation, —pot-house gossip) rejected as only suited to the ideas of tap-room toppers? The term is used advisedly. There is the faint, oppressive odour of that region—saturated with the stench of stale beer, and the despoiling of men's reputations—about almost all the "traditions" of Shakespere. Shakespere with merry companions, over the "cheerful bowl," is perpetually being presented to our notice by tradition. Shakespere, and "the science of drinking (at Bidford) the largest quantity of liquor without being intoxicated!" Shakespere dead-drunk, and sleeping the
night

night through “under the umbrageous
“boughs of a crab-tree!” Shakespere
making doggrel verses at the expense of
his particular and personal friend, at a
tavern, said to have been known by the
sign of “the Bear!” Shakespere drinking
too hard at a merry-meeting, and dying
thereby of a fever!

Oh! pundits of our literature! bio-
graphers of the greatest man of all your
craft! lovers of the Saxon tongue! is it
by such boozing tales as these that ye
honour the High Priest of your profes-
sion? Must the incense that you offer
at his shrine reek with the coarse odour
of the village politician’s and wiseacre’s
foul tobacco, and still fouler breath?
Can no Neibuhr of English record be
found strong enough and manly enough
to cleanse the stream of history, by
purifying and contemptuous ridicule of
this corrupting garbage, polluting every-
thing

thing with its poisonous "tradition?" We are taught to distrust an autograph of Shakespere's, and cautioned not to believe a scrap of writing to be true, unless there is internal corroborative evidence to establish its authority! Better, surely, to caution the world against believing a scrap of vulgar gossip, unless there is some internal, and corroborative evidence to establish its authenticity. No one is a jot the worse or better whether a line of writing be genuine or forged; but a whole nation is made worse,—every man who speaks the Saxon tongue is worse, because his confidence and respect are shaken, if he discover that the teacher of the highest, noblest thoughts—the Poet who fills the heart with admiration for all that is noble and virtuous and honourable in human nature, began life as a thief, spent it as a vagabond, and ended it as a drunkard! Softer-spoken words might be culled from
the

the dictionary ; but these are the real and simple terms by which, in plain, unvarnished speech, Shakespere deserves to be described, if the self-condemning "traditions" in common currency regarding him are to be reproduced and re-believed.

It may be said, that the author has met tradition by nothing better than suggestion and that any one can draw pictures from imagination. But this would hardly be just. Which sort of evidence is more agreeable and acceptable,—that which is probably true because it rests upon conclusions derived from known facts ; or that which is probably untrue, because it rests upon no other foundation than the loose and shifting stories of gossips ?

Gossip represents Shakespere as a boozing and beer-drinking fellow. Facts do not prove that he was not ; but facts provide us with evidences of his energy, labour,

labour, and thrift, leading us to conclusions from those facts which convince us he could not possibly have been so. *Ex uno disce omnes!* Gossip says he was a deer-stealer in Charlecote Park: facts now prove that statement to be positively false, and that if he killed a deer at Fulbroke, Sir Thomas Lucy had no power to prevent him. Gossip says he ran away to avoid the knight's displeasure; facts prove that his father was a man in considerable repute, connected with the Mercer's trade, but that he got into difficulties; and at that precise period we find young Shakespere went to London. Facts truly do not prove, but they lead us to a reasonable conclusion based upon them, that Shakespere went to London for good and honest purposes; and that he went as a man of business, not as a homeless vagrant is the more probable, because facts show that his father retained possession

sion of his residence, and we hear no more of his troubles ; while in a brief period of time his son returned to Stratford, able to establish himself in the "Great House" there.

Let us judge of Shakespere by what we really know of him, however small and circumscribed the amount of our information may be. Rejecting with scorn the old wives' fables, which other old wives seem to have delighted in perpetuating, it is a safer and more honourable path to pursue, if we set out upon a journey in search of facts, and, like Pilgrim, ease our shoulders of that bundle of fictions which have burdened us. Let tradition be a finger-post, and nothing more ! If the enthusiastic lovers of the Poet would content themselves with healthy exercise, they might perhaps find that there are still many facts waiting to be dug out of ancient records that have been brushed
past

past by us ten thousand times, and yet never detected. The silver mines of Potosi were discovered by the tearing aside of a bramble; and yet their treasures had laid through the long centuries close to the handling of men. So it may prove that there are treasures of history that have been very close to some among us, which an accident some day may disclose. Even though it be not so, the subject is well worth diligent search.

It seems extraordinary that many of the rapturous admirers of the genius of the Poet perpetuate, as if they were true, so many vulgar slanders and gossips regarding the man. If they were true, we might begin to suspect there is something after all in that strange theory that Shakespere's plays were never written by Shakespere, but by Francis Bacon; because it would be impossible to reconcile the man that we should picture from the writings

writings, with the man that we should know in his acts. In Mr. Charles Knight's most interesting "Biography of "Shakespere" and running commentary upon contemporary history, manners, and habits of the country, a proper and contemptuous protest is entered against the ungracious doggel attributed to Shakespere, as written at the expense of his friend and neighbour John à Combe, an estimable, worthy, and charitable gentleman, whom tradition has nicknamed ufurer! Ufurer! Let any one read his Will, and it will be seen what a friend the poor of Stratford had in the kind old man who lived among them, and bountifully bequeathed his property for their benefit. The good that he did, has, indeed, been interred with his bones.

This story, and others, Mr. Knight has dismissed as they deserve. It is heartily to be desired that many more of the
Poet's

Poet's biographers had done, and would still do, the same.

Can no other picture of him be drawn? Let us make the attempt.

It will be admitted that Shakespere was a precocious and ambitious youth. Let the motive for his early marriage have been what it may, there was precocity in the step. But if we discard the dishonouring suggestions that have been made regarding it, and consider it as the act of a young man who had a solemn and earnest appreciation of the value and purpose of life, we shall find that such a view of the transaction harmonises with the whole of Shakespere's conduct. Let it be said—it matters not—that this is taking a very novel view of his conduct: is it not better, when we are attributing motives to a person, to try and find good rather than bad ones? Shakespere, it is true, needs no apologist, least of all the advocacy

vocacy of so feeble a pen as that which traces these lines ; but to furnish motives for a man's acts is a pastime at which all can play an even game ; and therefore the fancy of one man is just as good as that of another. The Poet's character is read from a totally different point of view in these pages to that taken by De Quincey and by many others.* Let it be pardoned, if in love and admiration the author seems presumptuous when he says, that he considers, in the glorification of the poet, Shakespere's character has wanted staunch and faithful champions,—men

“To think no slander ; no, nor listen to it.”

Let the suggestion above made be entertained for a moment, and in what a totally different light do the two momentous actions of the Poet's life present themselves ! —his early marriage, and his early setting
out

* Appendix I.

out for London to fight circumstance and conquer independence !

Precocity and ambition are herein combined. Who shall blame them ? This man commenced life as a good man should begin it : there was no "sowing of wild oats ;" no libertinism ; no exhaustion of the strength of youth amidst the stews of a metropolis. Let Shakespere's acts—the facts of his life—be weighed against the words of gossips who never knew him, and the author contends those facts all go to turn the scale in his favour.

His first step on the threshold of manhood argues the sense of responsibility, and the ambition for respectability. It was in the man ; and it came out and showed itself at the earliest possible moment.*

There

* When it was stated, at p. 31, that there are two seals to Shakespere's marriage bond, one bearing the impression "R.H.," it would have been more correct to say there "were," because the seals have entirely vanished, and there is scarcely a trace of them on the parchment.

There is another characteristic—the granting of arms to Shakespere's father.

It

parchment. Nearly fourteen years have elapsed since the author last heard anything of that bond, and it was only by accident that, being in Worcester lately, he took the opportunity to give it a fresh examination. On doing so, he compared the text of Mr. Halliwell and Mr. Knight with the original, and found that the copy (given at pp. 29, 30) is perfectly correct, while that of Mr. Knight ("Biography," p. 275) contains these errors:—

"By reason of any ꝑcontract or affinitie, or by any other," &c., instead of "by reason of any ꝑcontract, consanquitie, affinitie," &c.

"May lawfully solemnize m̄riony," instead of "may lawfully solemnize m̄riony together."

"Laws in that case provided," instead of "lawes in that behalf provided."

With regard to Luddington, as the probable place of Shakespere's marriage, it may be well to put it on record that there is still living an old gentleman, named Pidering, at Colton, near Alcester, who, when a youth, resided at Luddington. This person distinctly remembers having heard it positively asserted by the inhabitants of the hamlet that Shakespere was married in their chapel; and he also remembers the books and registers of the chapel being burnt in a fire which occurred at his cousin's, the chapelwarden's house, *at the commencement of the present century*. (*Query*. Did Malone ever search those books?) Mr. Baldwin, who now occupies the farm on Luddington Green, preserves the remains of a Gothic font which belonged to the chapel, as also the Black-letter Bible which belonged to the reading-desk, and the key of the porch, which was dug up a few years since in the garden which now covers the ruins.

It is universally admitted that this was Shakespere's act; and that it was he who prompted John Shakespere's application to Herald's College.

It will be observed upon the Shakespere Pedigree, that the condition of his ancestors and the grants of lands, as recorded in the draft of the pedigree in Herald's College, have been reproduced as correct, attributing them to the favour of Henry VII., to whom John Shakespere's great-grandfather did faithful and approved service. William Dethick, Garter Principal King-at-Arms, has been charged with granting arms improperly; and Mr. Halliwell particularly dwells upon the scoring and interlining of the original grant of 1596. It seems to the author that this scoring and correction was most natural, and that in all probability it occurred from the fact of the evidence being taken down from the lips of William Shakespere.

Dethick

Dethick is not to be charged with the falsehood or misrepresentation, if any, appearing in the two drafts of arms, dated 1596 and 1599. In both these the faithful services of the Shakespeares to King Henry VII. is solemnly asserted; and it is hard to believe that the assertion is untrue, when it agrees so well with the probable settlement of the Shakespeares in Warwickshire, and was made, almost beyond doubt, by the Poet personally, to Dethick, since the draft bears date when Shakespeare was busy in London, and the *year before he purchased New Place*—a significant fact!

Therefore, on the Pedigree in this book, that statement is accepted and believed, because the author believes the draft was drawn under information provided by William Shakespeare himself; and he believes likewise that the man, with the chivalric feelings of a gentleman, would have scorned to tell a lie.

It

It has been suggested that because, as it will be seen, the Ardens served King Henry VII., Shakespere was confounding his maternal with his paternal ancestors. So that we may take our choice as to whether, in the first case, he was a liar; or, in the second, a fool. Pleasing alternatives for those who relish them! But it is to be hoped there are not wanting believers in the candour and truthfulness of the Poet; who, like Mr. C. Knight, in his "Biography," accept with credit the statement found in both the drafts, for which we must hold Shakespere himself responsible, confidently believing that it was supplied as information by him in the drawing of the first draft of 1596, and repeated by Garter King in 1599.

But what was the motive for Shakespere instigating his father to obtain this grant? It can hardly fail to be obvious
to

to any mind that is not tortuous. The author believes that the grant was fought with the same motive that the early marriage was contracted,—that New Place was purchased,—and that Shakespere's will, finally, was made. It seems to him that in all these things, and in his wonderful mental activity and positive labour, there was the one noble, worthy, ambitious motive throughout: Shakespere wished to found a family. He loved from his early days the honoured respectability of an English gentleman. He longed and desired that his family should achieve a place among the gentry of Warwickshire. The ambition that we have seen in the present century, at Abbotsford, was precisely what was seen at New Place in 1597. Perhaps there is a more extended parallel between Scott and Shakespere than this. Was there not the same historic feeling in both these men?

The

The love for antiquity, for descent, for heraldry, for chivalric story and incident, is conspicuous in each of them ! Shakespere's plays are historic chronicles ; so are Scott's novels. They present in a popular form, to the entrancement of the people, a moving spectacle of events of which many would otherwise be profoundly ignorant. It requires a peculiar sympathy of mind to deal with such subjects,—and that *thorough sympathy* was inbred in the characters of Shakespere and Scott.

No careless reader of Shakespere's works can possibly miss observing the antiquary's taste that pervades them. Let this be carried in memory, and the pride of ancestry, in the draft of the grant of arms, will be recognised as his natural characteristic, and not as Dethick's invention.

It will be observed that the author treats with absolute disbelief and disgust

guft the “traditions” current concerning the Poet; and he is impatient of them, becaufe he folemnly believes them to be injurious to the credit which the Man, as diftinct from the Poet, deserves to enjoy among his countrymen. He believes that the known and authenticated facts of Shakespere’s life, taken by themfelves, prefent to us a Character to be refpected and loved, juft as much as his works do a Poet to be admired. Of thofe leading events of Shakespere’s life which have been fummariſed above, he conceives that, when any mind difengages itſelf from the mire of tradition, they can only be regarded in one light,—to his honour and fair fame.

This is a mighty contraſt and contradiction to the currently-received ſtories about ſtealing deer, marrying in ſhame, and running away to London! But thofe are ſtories without confirmation or evidence,

dence, and the author holds they are positively irreconcilable with the proved and authentic facts of Shakespere's life, which uniformly exhibit him as an industrious, high-minded, aspiring citizen, and a man ambitious of taking rank with the families of English gentry.

We are informed by Rowe, who gives the story on the authority of Sir William Davenant, that Lord Southampton, out of his great friendship for Shakespere, presented him with £1000, to enable him to make a purchase for which he had a mind. This gift is supposed to have been made some time subsequent to the year 1593, when "Venus and Adonis" was published, and dedicated to his lordship!

We float aloft into a higher and purer atmosphere when we picture our Shakespere winning and holding such an "especial friend,"—being socially connected with such a man as Southampton; and
befriended

befriended by William and Philip Herbert, Earls of Pembroke and Montgomery.

Something too much has been written about the inferior position of the Poet; and that position has been kept down by the everlasting low-lived stories with which his name has been begrimed.

Shakespeare's genius needs no eulogies. It were to paint the lily to laud that. But *Shakespeare*—the man, the citizen, the high-minded polished gentleman, ambitious of position and asserting his title to associate with gentlemen—this is a person of whom we have heard too little. From all that his biographers have commonly put before us, we might naturally conclude that he was a sort of dramatic penny-a-liner, scribbling by day from necessity—at the point of the literary bayonet—the pen—a certain amount of “copy,” the value of which was unknown to himself, and delighting at night in the sottish society of taverns.

taverns. It may be that on these pages this picture of him is exposed in a broader and more glaring light than the public are accustomed to see it in. The author asserts that it is the true light; and believes that the social and moral portraiture of the man, as painted by "tradition" (fishwives' gossip), is as gross and preposterous as he also believes every one of those daubs, (Chandos or otherwise), which are foisted on the public as likenesses of the physical man, are like sign-painters' portraits, having far less relation to the original than the "Saracen's Head" had to Sir Roger de Coverley. Is there not more satisfaction in contemplating Shakespere as the especial friend of Southampton, than as regarding him as the "hale-fellow, well-met" companion of the swilling chaw-bacons of "Piping Pebworth, Dancing Marston," &c. &c.?

Talk of reverence for this mighty
man's

man's works!—it seems there is plenty of lack of reverence for the man himself.

Let us ask ourselves, when we prate about our love for the “Immortal Bard,” where we find anything to justify our base-born traditional rubbish about that Immortal Man? Shakespere could not have acquired the independence he did, had he not been a sober, cleanly-living, thrifty man.

Shakespere could not have instigated his father to acquire that coat-of-arms, had he not been an ambitious man: ambitious in the purest and best sense of that word—ambitious to raise himself in social position and respect.

Shakespere would not have completed the purchase of such a property as New Place, and have made it his permanent residence, unless he had been what we now call commercially “a thoroughly respectable man,” anxious to take his
place

place amongst gentlemen, and to be esteemed as "generosus" in his own county.

Every *known fact* of his life goes to support these assertions. Let fact be weighed in the scale with fable, and the measure of the man will give us for result a character to respect, as well as a genius to admire.

Something has been said in allusion to Heraldry. There is one source of indirect information regarding Shakespere which has never as yet been thoroughly examined. Authors and biographers have riddled through the sieve of criticism every grain of direct evidence regarding him, known of, and available. Close Rolls, Records, Inquisitions, Registers, have surrendered their silent testimonies. But Fines, Leases, Sales, Births, Deaths, and Marriages, while they give us direct and positive knowledge, do not give that indirect testimony

mony to be gathered from contemporary association. A Pedigree, quaint and formal as it may look, when well read and studied, may yet be found to guide the antiquary's search in some direction rich with indirect, and leading perchance to the most direct, evidence regarding the Poet.

As these lines are being penned, there lie before the writer twelve hundred closely-written foolscap sheets of Warwickshire pedigrees and family histories, compiled by the late Rev. Thomas Warde, Vicar of Weston-under-Wetherley and of Barford, Warwickshire. They are a part of the labour of a long life of an enthusiastic antiquary's research. They are interspersed with pen-and-ink sketches of ancient Warwickshire timber-houses, many of which are now destroyed; and their pages are crowded with the most interesting family and local records, such as have
not

not been collected together by any one since Sir W. Dugdale published his famous book, despite its numerous errors. When the author first perused this MS., his intention was to quote from it largely; but he has relinquished that idea, partly because to do so properly would have involved the publication of a work of magnitude; and partly because in doing so it would have been robbing the MS. itself of riches, which, in the author's opinion, would have been like rifling the tomb of the dead of its treasure. Whole and undefiled the Rev. Mr. Warde's MS. shall remain, until such time as its precious and singularly interesting pages can be given entire to the public; though that portion of the public which takes interest in such matters will grieve to hear that the documents now confided to the author's charge do not form more than a quarter of the number which once existed, and
perished

perished in a fire in London some years ago. From the pages of the fragment of twelve hundred sheets still preserved, many items of information contained in this volume have been gathered; and a store of detail regarding the Lucys, Underhills, Combes, Boughtons, Shirleys, Cloptons, Carews, Grevilles, Throckmortons, and others who lived in Shakespere's time, has proved to the author the value of the opinion he now expresses, as to the wide field of indirect evidence still to be explored, calculated to convey most interesting information, that may lead to a far more perfect knowledge of Shakespere himself than the present age possesses.

The names just given (and many others of the Warwickshire gentry might be added), when we study them by the help of the College of Arms, are found linked together by intermarriages, bringing before us curious and interesting facts elsewhere

where unattainable ; and repeopling the past by such aid, we are enabled to surround Shakespere with the forms and figures of men and women who, in the nature of things, must have known him well, and been known by him. The names of Sir Thomas Lucy, William Combe, Sir Thomas Throckmorton, and Fulke Greville pass before us as Members for the county of Warwick. By turning to the Clopton Pedigree, we find John Combe married to Rose Clopton, of Clopton.* On the tomb of Judith Combe, in Stratford, we find the arms of Combe quartered with Underhill, and the history of the two families puts before us the intermarriages. In the same way we learn of the alliance between the daughter of Sir Stephen Hales, the contemporary of Shakespere, and Edward Combe.

Again,

* Appendix J.

Again, the grandson of Thomas Underhill married the daughter of Sir William Lucy. And again, Jocola, or Joyce Clopton (three years younger than Shakespere, born 1568), married George Carew, afterwards Earl of Totness. These were people associated with Stratford, with many of whom Shakespere must have been familiar. The Combes, the Underhills, the Cloptons, the Carews, it may be asserted without any hesitation, were his friends. What does the world know of these people? It has heard John Combe libelled as a usurer; and been told that he was Shakespere's friend until the Poet lampooned him. It has learned that the Earl of Totness was a brave foldier. And this is all. The evidence of John Combe's regard for Shakespere has paled before a doggel verse. The evidence of Shakespere's attachment to the Combes has been made nothing of.

The

The fact that Lord Totness, living at Clopton House, was a man of letters and an author, has escaped notice beyond the record of the fact itself. And the story that Lord Southampton presented Shakespere with £1000 to complete a purchase on which he had set his heart, has never, it is believed, been pointed at the acquirement of New Place.

When people have been sufficiently nauseated with the sentimental rubbish with which the press has teemed about the "Immortal Bard," and when the tap-room talk, yclept tradition, has been poured out into the gutter with its kindred dregs, the healthy and honest researches of the good and true searchers of this age after fact, will lead to the gathering of new materials for writing the history of Shakespere. In so doing it will be well to surround him with the social facts of Stratford at the time when he lived,
having

having stripped him of the fables of half a century after he died. It is surely more profitable to know the persons among whom he dwelt, than to listen to the loose statements of people that he never saw. Inquiries about his contemporaries may bring us to discover something about *him*; but if they never teach us anything positive as to his history, there is some satisfaction in contemplating the men and women who had the privilege of his acquaintance.

Let us glance at one or two of the Stratford worthies of the Shakesperian age.

There were three houses which we of the present generation would give much to have rescued from destruction: New Place, the Poet's home; the College of Stratford, the home of his friend John à Combe; Clopton House, the home of the Cloptons and Carews. Of these three, two have utterly perished: the third,
Clopton

Clopton House, exists as it was reconstructed by Sir Edward Walker (F) in the time of Charles II. Happily one morsel of the original house, built in the time of Henry VII., has been spared. It stands at the back of the present mansion, and was a porch-way entrance across the ancient moat. One hundred and forty years have passed away since a Sir Hugh Clopton (H), and withal a Herald of the College of Arms, destroyed the house in which Shakespere died. The present generation, therefore, has been robbed of nothing which it has contemplated and possessed. Not so with the College. That venerable structure, erected in the reign of Edward III. by Ralph de Stratford, Bishop of London, and adjoining the yard of Stratford Church, was shamefully destroyed within the memory of living men. This monastic establishment had been "embellished" at the
front

front towards the church, with Georgian facing ; but at the back it still retained many of its mediæval architectural features. Unfortunately, in the year 1796, it was sold to one Edmund Battersbee, a man who had made money in Manchester, and cursed Stratford by settling there. The MS. records in the author's trust, allude to the College as follows :—

“ In 1797, the furniture of this
“ mansion, the College, was disposed of
“ by auction, together with a collection
“ of paintings. Many of them were very
“ curious, ancient, and valuable ; and
“ some very interesting family portraits,
“ which were, unfortunately for the
“ antiquary, sold and dispersed. Whole
“ lengths of Queen Elizabeth, Charles II.
“ and his Queen, Louis XIII. and his
“ Queen. Charles II. and his Queen,
“ Louis and his, are now in the Town
“ Hall

“ Hall at Lichfield, having been purchased
“ for a trifle each, for Mr. Green’s
“ museum in that town, and since its
“ being discontinued, these pictures—*not*
“ *finding a purchaser!*—have been all
“ hung up in the Town Hall. Full
“ length paintings of George, Prince of
“ Denmark, George I., and II. also de-
“ corated this antique mansion. A large
“ piece, bearing the date 1641. A half-
“ length portrait of Juxon, Bishop of
“ London, who attended the unfortunate
“ King Charles I. to the scaffold. This
“ painting very likely was an original, as
“ the pious Bishop, at the time of the
“ usurpation of Cromwell, retired to his
“ house at Little Compton, in Gloucester-
“ shire, which is not far from Strat-
“ ford. A very beautiful half-length
“ portrait of Lady Radnor, *and innume-*
“ *rable family portraits!* and others too
“ numerous to mention.

“ This

“ This venerable mansion,—which had
“ existed through a lapse of 446 years,
“ and since the suppression of the religious
“ houses in the reign of Henry VIII.
“ had been the residence of several very
“ honourable families,—was now doomed
“ to fall, and its ancient walls to be
“ pulled down to the ground, though the
“ whole of the mansion was in perfect
“ repair, and some parts of it fitted up in
“ the modern style by its purchaser, who
“ very unfortunately had purchased it.
“ Being an entire stranger to the town of
“ Stratford, having lately purchased the
“ house standing near the large gates of
“ the entrance to the church, where he
“ resided, and having more money than
“ any regard for venerable antiquity, or
“ any respect for antiquarian lore, or the
“ ancient possessors of this noble mansion,
“ he, tradesman-like,—for he was a Man-
“ chester tradesman,—not liking that the
“ ground

“ground facing his own house should be
“encumbered with such an old anti-
“quated building, determined to have the
“whole pulled down, like Mr. Gastrell,
“who destroyed the famous mulberry-
“tree. By the taking down of this an-
“cient pile the town of Stratford had to
“lament the deprivation of one of the
“chief and greatest ornaments. But Mr.
“Battersbee, regardless of public opinion,
“and desirous of the land on which it
“stood, to make use of part for a kitchen-
“garden and the rest for pasture for his
“cattle, destroyed the whole of the old
“College in 1800. *Sic transit, &c.*”

The above quotation has been made in full, that the reader may have a specimen of the ruthless manner in which, little more than half a century ago, the most interesting family reliques were dispersed, and the house in which Shakespere had spent many an hour with the Combes and
the

the Cloptons was destroyed ! Can it be that when old swords, and halberds, and rusting antiquities were turned out with the pots and kettles, Shakespere's sword went along with them ? *It is quite possible.*

Pass we on now to Clopton House, which, happily, remains. As before stated, one remnant of the antique Shakesperian edifice still stands : the remainder of the mansion being Carolean. Nestling under the western sweep of Welcombe Hills, the slopes rich with verdure, dotted with copses, and shadowed with ancient trees, among which the deer feed, stands Clopton House. As we look upon that solitary remnant of the Tudor House, we feel a thrill of pleasure in the conviction that under its portal Shakespere and his friends must have passed scores of times. The moat ran directly in front of it, and was a few years back disturbed, in
order

order to lay some modern foundations. Various trifling reliques of by-gone days were recovered, and among others three sack-bottles of stunted form, made of the coarsest glass. Two of them had the crest of Combe upon them. There is a theme for a reverie! Sack from the College, taken up to the House! Was it an offering from John à Combe to Lord Totness? Was it a special present at some Christmas time, when the lips of the Lady Joyce or the Poet pledged the cup, and did honour to the "Boar's Head?" Who can tell? The empty bottles sunk in the mud of a moat for centuries come back to light, and tell us on what friendly terms the families of Combe and Clopton were, in the days when they pledged the toast in sack.*

There

* One of these bottles is now in possession of the author. From the length of time that it has been buried, it has acquired those prismatic colours which grow upon glass under the soil.

There is but one place left which, in its reliques and affociations, brings Shakspeare vividly back to the imagination, and that is Clopton House !

We enter its noble hall, with recessed bay-window full of the Clopton coats of arms, and running our eyes round the walls we light upon the manly, massive head of George Carew, Lord Totness. There hangs his portrait as fresh, and in as fine preservation as the day it was painted.* There, too, are numerous members of the Clopton family—Joyce, the Countess, venerable men, and noble ladies, coming down in succession to Mr. and Mrs. Partheriche. There is a splendid original of the “Lady Elizabeth,” Cromwell’s

* There are two portraits of Lord Carew at Clopton House. The one here referred to came from Aston Hall, Birmingham; the other, which has always been in the house, hangs in one of the galleries. Both pictures seem to have been painted at one date, and the treatment is the same; but the Aston is in far the best preservation.

Cromwell's mother: and a most interesting painting of the river front of Whitehall Palace in the days of the Stuarts. Among a multitude of others, is a beautiful portrait of Sir Edward Walker, wearing his badge of Garter King.

In turning over the papers and MSS. of Clopton House the author met with an ancient written and *emendated* copy of the third part of "Jewel's Apology!"

What story could this manuscript tell! It is in the handwriting of the time of Mary and Elizabeth. Whose was the book? Could it ever have belonged to Jewel himself, or was it made for some member of this Clopton family? Who can guess?

Perhaps the most precious book of all at Clopton is a small volume by Richard Pynson—a collection of Statutes. It is as complete and perfect as the day it issued from the press of the King's Printer.

This

This book transports us back to Shakespere's own times. It was in his day exactly what we see it now. Whence it came, whose it was, none can tell. But it is among the old books and papers of such a place as Clopton that we best like to meet with such a book. Tumbling about in unknown nooks and corners there may yet be found other such, and more direct evidences connected both with the Poet's period and the Poet himself. Here, at least, is one book published before Shakespere's birth, which we find preserved not only in Warwickshire, but in the very house with which all his circle of friends is associated. Let the fact speak for itself.

From the houses let us glance at their masters and mistresses !

Much stress has been laid upon heraldic research, and the author,—it may be somewhat boldly, but, nevertheless, very sincerely,—

cerely,—has expressed not merely his opinion about the value of heraldic records, upon which there needs no opinion to be expressed; but his conviction that there is yet much knowledge to be gained from researches, to which a comparison of the Warwickshire pedigrees of Shakespere's age, would lead the inquirer. In preparing these pages for the Press, the examination of the Visitations has led the author again and again upon the track of information of which he was previously in utter ignorance. May not the same result await other inquirers? Moreover, we experience a freshened interest when we gain a knowledge of the persons who surround the Poet in familiar intercourse. That marriage register—

“1561. June 4.—Johannes Combes, *Generosus*,
“et Rosa Cloptonne”—

brings Shakespere into connection with the great folk at Clopton from his earliest years.

years. Rose was married the year after her father died, and her brother William had come into possession. She was mistress of the College during the first fifteen years of the Poet's life, and as she watched him growing, and saw him attain his fourth year, she would hear the news from the House that her brother's wife had brought him a little girl—duly christened Jocosa or Joyce. This was the future Countess. The Poet would be just old enough to remember her being born, the year after William Underhill, Esquire, had come to reside at New Place. The boy and girl grew up to man's and woman's estate, familiar with the same people and having the same friends. In 1575, Queen Elizabeth arrived at Kenilworth, and Master Langham, in his letter to Master Martin describing the Queen's visit, discovered that "Olld Hags, prying into every place, "are az fond of nuelltiez az yoong girls " that

“that had never seen Court afore.” Then did the men of Coventree make petition that they “moought renue now
“their old Storical Sheaw,”—“of late
“laid dooun they knoe no cawz why,
“onles it wear by the zeal of certain
“theyr preacherz. Men very commend-
“able for their behaviour and learning,
“and fweet in their sermons, but some-
“what too four in preaching away theyr
“Pastime.”*

Among the young girls who had never seen Court afore we may probably reckon Joyce Clopton, for the author has discovered, among the pedigree MSS. in his custody, that at an early age Joyce was appointed

* A curious MS. copy of the celebrated “Letter wherein part of the Entertainment unto the Queen’s Majesty at Killingwoorth Castl: in Warwickshere in this Soomerz Progreß, 1575, is signified,” is in the author’s possession. The writer notes “this manuscript is valuable.” The author’s name is given, Langham. Mr. Knight calls him “the entertaining coxcomb, “Laneham.”

appointed a Maid of Honour to Queen Elizabeth, being "a great favourite and remarkable for her virtues." Most likely the Queen first saw the little girl, aged seven, on this memorable occasion, when William Clopton (C), her father, came to Kenilworth to do honour to Leicester. However this may be, the lithe Joyce must have been brought about the Queen's person at a very youthful period, for young George Carew, a Captain in the army, met her, made love to her, and married her without her father's knowledge when she was 19 years of age! "Mr. Clopton was greatly displeased with his daughter's marriage with Captain Carew, which was without his knowledge and consent, and intended to disinherit her. But upon an accidental meeting and conversing with Captain Carew, he found him a man of superior genius and fine address, which qualifications

“fications so effectually recommended
“him to his favour that he was recon-
“ciled, and settled his estate at Clopton,
“which was very considerable, upon him
“and his daughter.”

By reference to the Pedigree, it will be found that Clopton House was in the possession of three persons during the whole of Shakespere's life. William Clopton (C) inherited it three years before the Poet's birth, and enjoyed it until 1592, when Shakespere was 28 years of age. Joyce and her husband succeeded, and long outlived the Poet.

In these three persons we have individuals of rank, importance, and intellectual power. The traditions which associate Shakespere with Clopton House would be of little value, were it not that they are finger-posts directing us to inquiries which give us every confidence that he was so associated. The Combes,
Cloptons,

Cloptons, Underhills, Boughtons (of Lawford), we find linked together by family ties and social bonds. In the midst of them, in the "Great House," that had belonged to the families of two of them, Shakespere resided. It is a happy, pleasant picture that the mind creates for itself, as in imagination it repeoples the College, and New Place, and Clopton House, and the neighbouring residences of Idlicote and Boughton. We seem to see our Shakespere enjoying, and enjoyed in, such society. When we turn to the Pedigree, and learn what was the character and fame of George Carew, Earl of Totness, we can conceive in the brave soldier's periods of leave and repose how greatly he would appreciate such conversation as he might find in New Place. Carew was himself an author, and esteemed a literary character in his day. Being sent by James I., in 1609, on an embassy
to

to France, he drew up on his return a relation of the state of that country, and gave portraitures of Henri Quatre, and of the principal people about the Court. He also wrote the "*Pacata Hibernia*," a history of the wars in Ireland, which Bishop Nicholson says contained the transactions of three years of much fighting, in Munster, from the latter end of the year 1599 to the death of Queen Elizabeth. He also translated into English a history of Irish affairs, written by Maurice Regan, a servant of the King of Leinster, in the year 1171; the MS. of which work was formerly in the library of the Duke of Chandos.

Without pursuing the records of pedigrees further, it is to be hoped that enough has been brought forward to answer the question at page 105, which the author supposed being put to him.

It is true there is no positive and direct
evidence

evidence that Shakespere ever associated with many of the persons that have been named. Heaven forbid that there ever should be found any direct evidence that he associated with any of the persons into whose society he is degraded by tradition !

But which is the trustier of the two—the fair and natural conclusions which the mind draws from the contemplation of contemporaneous facts ; or the idle, loose, and shifting stories of persons who had never seen the Poet, or could speak a word from their own knowledge ?

Shakespere's character, read by the offensive taper-light of village gossip, is not the character which the student of his works would expect to meet, and be miserably disappointed if he did not meet.

The weights and measures of conscience—the things she approves, or disapproves—have one eternal, unchanging standard. In every age there is the same
sense

sense of right and wrong, clean and unclean, sober and dissolute. Shakespere either was or was not a man to love and respect, as well as a Poet to admire. If he sank so low as to have his pastime with tipplers and drunkards, then our diminished regard tarnishes the brilliancy of our admiration. But if there is absolutely no evidence whatever to prove aught against the man ; if deer stealing, and vagabondising, and hard drinking are unsupported by a single established, proved fact ; and if, on the contrary, they are singularly at variance with what *are the known facts* of this great man's life, it is but just to his memory, and giving him the honour which is his due, if we scout with contempt the wrencings of tap-tubs and the vulgar gossip of clowns.

The view of Shakespere's life and character which the writer takes, is not drawn from imagination, present-
ing

ing an outline which will admit of no faults. It is easy to mount a Pegasus, and soar aloft on the wings of grandiloquent words about his genius, and his poetry, and his dramatic skill. It is the prosaic, and not the sentimental, view of the man Shakespere with which these pages are engaged. It is Shakespere's Home which is their concern. Planting our feet on a few acres of land, under the shadow of Holy Cross, in Stratford, the object is to know as much as possible about that home historically and socially, and to know what the man was who inhabited it.

His ambition to acquire possession of New Place was as honourable and laudable as it seems natural. Was not John Shakespere, the Poet's father, engaged in the same trade as the great Sir Hugh Clopton, however wide the difference in the extent of their dealings? That Great
House

Houfe had been the London mercer's home. It had belonged to the man who made his money in Old Jewry and the Cheape. Before Shakespere fet out for London, when his father was in difficulties, he very probably took a lingering look at the houfe,—took courage from the memory of the man who had lived in it,—and fet out for London town with a ftern determination to win independence himfelf, and return to live in Stratford, enjoying it. Let us review the circumftances of his life, and we fhall find all this is moft natural, and harmonifes with what we know *are facts*. His running away to London, like a thief, to efcape Sir Thomas Lucy, is a wretched, crack-brained ftory, bafed upon no fact whatever; but invented folely to try and make out a reafon for Shakespere's going, when a natural and fufficient reafon laid clofe at hand.

Lord

Lord Southampton gave him £1000 to complete some purchase he greatly desired. There was a purchase completed, and probably completed in a hurry, for the vendor sold in Easter term, and was dead in July! May not Lord Southampton's money have been given for this particular purpose? And when Shakspeare was settled at New Place, what are the evidences, the *facts*, we know of him? They uniformly go to prove that he was a careful, industrious, money-making man, seeking to acquire property and to found a family. His proper ambition is discoverable in every movement of his life: in his acquirement of New Place; in his grant of arms by the College; in his will; in his various purchases of property; and, last of all, in the society of the persons with whom we conclude, both by positive and also by indirect evidence, that he associated.

As

As we tread the garden of New Place, and recall the mighty dead that once trod that same plot of earth, and called it his, let those who love to think of him as the Poet, think of him also as the Gentleman. The idle talk of men who never knew him has wafted down to us unproved and discreditable stories. At his threshold, when we enter New Place, let us shake them, with the dust, from off our feet. Shakespere's honest, anxious life deserves better from us than a readiness to hear him defamed. As we tread his garden let us think of him, and judge of him *by what we know of him*. It is not much, indeed, but it may some day be more. Such evidence as we have, all tells in his favour. It presents to us a man with goodly ambition raising himself and his family to present independence, and to everlasting fame. It presents to us a cautious, careful labourer—

a painstaking artist, a most skilful anatomist of human nature. It presents to us no hurried scribbler of plays, carelessly throwing off, without an idea of their beauty, the teeming imaginations of his brain, as it has been impudently asserted; but a man who chastened his muse with severe castigation, and applied himself through life with unhalting self-devotion, not only to seek out the treasures of thought, but to polish, and set his gems in such marvellous frameworks of plot, as in *Othello*, *Lear*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*, that the world has gazed these three hundred years with admiration and delight upon his wondrous workmanship.

And when we tread his garden let us think of him as the greatest, loftiest teacher of mankind who has ever spoken with uninspired lips. "There are," said Watfon, Bishop of Llandaff (to the late Duke of Rutland, when retiring from his tutorship),

tutorship), "two books to adhere to in
"your future life; one is the Book of the
"Child of God; the other the Book of
"the Child of Nature."

From Shakespere's House at New Place, many of the pages of that book went forth to the world; and in that garden, among its trees and flowers, their thoughts were meditated. Let us honour his memory where his very prefence seems to overshadow us.

*"A gleam of daylight set
Will gild the cloud of eve;
And the soul's light linger yet
O'er the place it sighed to leave."*

In writing about Shakespere, inches of fact have been fringed with acres of conjecture. When once an author has entered upon the field of conjecture he can wander along at his will, unchecked
and

and unhindered ! But if conjecture is suggestive of inquiry, where inquiry may not have been sufficiently made, perhaps it is not altogether worthless.

Where did Shakespere obtain his knowledge ? That question has been asked by every student of his works, and has never yet been satisfactorily answered.

Ben Jonson asserted that he had "small Latine, and lesse Greeke," by which, it is to be presumed, he meant to state that Shakespere had received the rudiments of a classical education, without being distinguished as a scholar. Such a conclusion might be fairly arrived at from a study of his plays. But though he might not have been able to translate the *Medea* or *Antigone* with ease, it does not admit of a doubt, that in some way or other, and at an early age, he must have read extensively — perhaps indiscriminately.

At

At eighteen he married. The youth, whether he was a lawyer's clerk, or apprenticed to business, had finished his curriculum at school before that event. We are consequently reduced to the necessity of considering his "education" (technically so called) as finished when he was seventeen years of age. Had he acquired the mass of information with which his mind was stored, previous to that date? or, during the labours of author and actor in London, did he find time to pursue the cultivation of his mind, as well as to inform himself of the data and historical facts regarding any particular play which he was going to write? A distinguished magistrate of the present day once answered the writer of these lines (on his expressing surprise at the minutely accurate information displayed by a popular novelist regarding the local history and historical records of a place he
had

had never visited), "Oh! give a man a fortnight at the British Museum and he will get up any period or place you please." No doubt there is much truth in this remark; but, *imprimis*, Shakespere had no British Museum to which he could refer; and, in the next place, the knowledge he displays in *Romeo*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, or any of the plays, the plots of which he borrowed from historical books, tracts, or stories he had read, is of a very much deeper and profounder character, than results from cursory reading. It is not the knowledge of a "common-place book," or a "cram," but the result of keen observation and close study.

Not in the technical, but in the broadest sense of the term "education," insufficient inquiry has been made, as to how, or by what means, Shakespere became self-educated? for it does not admit of dispute that his profound knowledge of human

human nature, and his marvellous capacity for the acquisition of facts, were the result of self-cultivation. No grammar school of King Edward VI. instructed a boy's mind as Shakespere's mind was instructed.

Conjecture speculates as to how he gained his information?

Suggestion, with a surmise, may inquire whether the history of the "Guild" at Stratford has ever been narrowly scrutinised, with a view to arriving at a conclusion.

Shakespere's lines in the Third Act of the *Twelfth Night* have been repeatedly quoted:—

MARIA. *He's in yellow stockings.*

SIR TOBY. *And cross-gartered.*

MARIA. *Most villainously; like a pedant that keeps
a school i' the church.*

Whether Shakespere had his own preceptor before his mind's eye, may be doubted; but there can be no doubt that
he

he alludes to a custom of his time, which had come under his own observation, which was the very common habit of holding public schools in the Lady chapels, or chancels of churches which had formerly been connected with monastic establishments.

There are many persons alive who have belonged to schools kept in the church—as, for instance, the Queen Elizabeth School, which was held in the Lady chapel of St. Mary Redcliffe at Bristol, and in which they received their education. Schools in the church were not uncommon. The school at St. Alban's continues to be held in the Lady chapel of that stupendous Norman abbey, to the present hour. A school was kept (perhaps still is) in the Triforium of Christ Church, Hants. The college school at Worcester also has been held in a noble hall within the Cathedral precincts. A long list of such schools in the church
might

might be given. But there is one remarkable fact connected with them; they have, as a general rule, been established or held in the Lady chapels, or chapels of suppressed monastic institutions, and not in buildings that were parochial churches before the Reformation. In connection with these suppressed monasteries, or cells, there were frequently valuable libraries, rich in ancient chronicles, tales of the wars, histories of royal heroes and valiant knights, as well as in the lives of the saints, missals, and breviaries.

Such an establishment was the Guild of the Holy Cross. Henry VIII. suppressed its conventual character. His son Edward VI. erected it into a grammar school. The Corporation records of Stratford prove that the chancel of the Guild Chapel was used as a "school i' the church," and it is altogether uncertain whether such use was continuous or temporary. Mr. Halli-
well

well and others imagine it was temporary, founding their opinions upon probabilities as they suggest themselves to their minds from an examination of the Corporation books. The items of allowances there alluded to in 1568 are:—"for repayryng
" the scole;" "for dresſyng and ſweepyng
" the ſcole houſe;" "for ground and
" ſellynge in the olde ſcole;" "for takyng
" doun the ſoller over the ſcole." Mr. Halliwell comments upon this—"This
" laſt entry would alone ſeem to prove
" that the ſchool was not then in the
" chapel, but in another building."

The difference in the terms of designation ſeems to warrant the opinion that there may have been an intended diſtinction between the "ſcole" and "olde
" ſcole." The uſe of the word "olde"
appears to ſignify that there were two ſchool-rooms, or places of teaching, belonging to the one "Grammar School,"
anſwering

answering probably to what is called in the present day, the upper and lower school. And if the chancel of the Guild Chapel had lately been appropriated for scholastic purposes, it was very natural in the Chamberlain's accounts, to describe the school-room in the monastic buildings of the ancient guild as "the "olde scole." It was the truest description, for the same place had been "a "scole" for fifty-two years previous to the suppression of the monasteries, having been founded in the last year of the reign of Edward IV., 1482, by a Thomas Jolyffe, under charge and control of the Guild of the Holy Cross.

There is another entry and date in the Corporation books, of great importance. In February, 1594, an order directs, that there shall be no school kept in the chapel from that date. It will be fair to conclude, that up to that year, from the
new

new foundation of the school in the 7th year of the reign of Edward VI., 1553, the Guild Chapel had been used for school-teaching; and in all probability about that date, the "olde scole" had such additional accommodation given to it, that it was no longer necessary to appropriate the Guild Chapel to such a purpose. Whether it was habitually used as a school from 1554 to 1594 (as the Lady chapel of St. Alban's still is, and St. Mary Redcliffe was until lately), is of no great moment, because distinct evidence proves, that, whether occasionally or habitually, to such use it was devoted during the years when Shakespere was at school, and (supposing he continued at school until he was sixteen) for fourteen years subsequently.

It may yet be discovered that greater impressions were produced upon the mind of the boy Shakespere by the advantages

tages he derived from the "school i' the "church," than have ever been suggested by commentators upon his life! Many obscurities have of late years been cleared up, by a careful perusal of documents hitherto neglected.

There are possibly in existence many documents, which, if discovered, would throw a flood of light upon the business of his manhood and his authorship, that remain for the present shrouded in obscurity. Probably enough, on that night in June, 1613, when Burbage was performing *Henry VIII.* in the Globe Theatre, Blackfriars, and the thatched roof catching fire, the entire building was destroyed, many MSS., plays, and note-books of the Poet's, may have perished in the flames, which would have set at rest the unsatisfactory question—How did Shakespere acquire his varied, profound, and also desultory knowledge?

The

The inquiry seems to force us to one or other of two conclusions: either he enjoyed peculiar advantages from the "school i' the church" which could not be derived from the ordinary cross-gartered pedants' routine of *Hic, Hæc, Hoc*, or he must have been enabled, by Lord Southampton, or some other influential person, to obtain access to a library in London. At the present moment, in the utter absence of all direct evidence upon the subject, we are thrown back upon probabilities, and the indirect internal evidence of Shakespere's writings. They appear to bear a twofold witness in favour both of Stratford and London; but such knowledge as so busy a man could acquire in London, was much more likely to be obtained for the occasion, and studied in histories and chronicles hurriedly, in order to construct the plots of his pieces, than to be of that profound and equally discursive

curfivè character, which remains to the present time the admiration and equally the puzzle of the world. In the plays which we know that Shakespere wrote, when one of the "owners" or "partners" of the Globe Theatre, and in the full strain of mental and physical exertion, we do find an immense amount of that "knowledge of a period" before alluded to, which is rather the business of a searcher of records, than of a student of literature. This, after all, is the mere skeleton of a play. The flesh and life that clothe those dry bones of history, could not be so read-up or crammed. The plays of *Henry IV.* and *Henry VI.* may serve for example. No Garter-King-at-Arms, no F.S.A. could supply us with more accurate knowledge of descent and pedigree, than do such speeches as those of Mortimer (First Part *Henry VI.*, Act ii.), and of the Duke of York (Second Part

Part *Henry VI.*, Act ii.). No historian could sketch character more admirably, or render narrative more transparent, than do the princes and prelates who speak in Act iv. Second Part of *Henry IV.* But while such knowledge might have been studied for the purpose, let it be remembered that this same Act is world-famous for a knowledge of a very different character—a knowledge of human nature, exhibited in the two phases of high and ordinary life,—King Henry and the Prince; and Justice Shallow, Falstaff, and Bardolph,—in itself sufficient to have established the fame of a humorist or satirist of any age. It is not a question of probability, but a known fact, that Shakspeare did model the skeletons of many of his plays upon the chronicles which he read while actively occupied at the Globe Theatre. Still, that does not account for the flesh, and blood, and life, with
which

which they are quickened; and in order to do so, it seems necessary to retrace our steps to Stratford, and to attribute them to a precocious acquisitiveness, as well as natural quickness of observation. Quickness of observation seems necessarily allied with the keenest sense of the ludicrous. The *traditions* of Stratford concerning the Poet's humour, *may well be trusted when we read his plays*; and when we regard him as a satirist of the follies of mankind, in comparison with the satirists of modern times, their attacks are but as the prick of a bodkin or a pin, compared with the flaying of a scalping-knife!

Shakespeare's knowledge was two-fold: it was the most wonderful that any human being has ever exhibited, regarded as knowledge resulting from observation; but it was also knowledge acquired by reading and study. In him every one recognises

nises the student as well as the observer. When did he study? Where did he study? A great amount of his knowledge of life, as exhibited in his rustic characters and clowns, was, we know, the photographing of persons with whom he had come in contact in Warwickshire! There also most probably was his study! It has been asserted that, towards the close of his life, he regularly retired to Stratford for the purpose of writing his plays. The assertion carries with it every probability, and it is likely enough the truth, that at Stratford he was habitually a student to the very close of his career. If the *Tempest* or *Henry VIII.* were the last plays he wrote, he must have been such. We may well incline to the belief, when we remember the touching farewells of Prospero and Wolsey to that power which they had so long exercised. Shakespere himself might be speaking
to

to us in the "long farewell," or in the lines:—

*"I'll break my staff,
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,
And deeper than did ever plummet sound,
I'll drown my book."*

It is not, however, with the close but with the commencement of his career, that we have to do. Was not Stratford the school-house of his life? Did not his mind,—with a precocity such as has been exhibited in Milton and Chatterton, and for which Lord Byron was nervously anxious that the world should give him credit,—eagerly and thirstily drink at the sources of such knowledge as were capable of being reached in his youthful years? Though it may seemingly be a very unsatisfactory manner of answering a question, to put another; nevertheless, when every lover of Shakespere has asked, and will continue to ask until the question is answered, "Where did the Poet gain his
"diversified

“diversified learning?” it may not be altogether useless to reply to such inquirers—Have you not passed over, without sufficiently searching consideration, the days that were spent at “the school i’ the “church?” Have you thoroughly investigated the character of that school, and of the Guild of the Holy Cross, with which it was originally incorporated? Have you satisfied yourselves, whether, in that very church, Shakespere might not have found those sources of knowledge which he evidently found somewhere and somehow?

Between the date when King Henry VIII. suppressed the monastic establishment in 1536, to the date of his son, Edward VI., reviving the School of the Guild in 1553, only seventeen years intervened. Those years were long enough to complete the work of dispersion or destruction among the libraries of abbeys that

that were themselves reduced to ruins, but no such ruin overtook the Guild of the Holy Cross. It was not an establishment of sufficient importance to be ruined, and accordingly it changed hands, and followed the destinies of the Reformation.

What became of its furniture—its chattels—above all, its books? Was there any library connected with the Free School of the Guild? If so, what object could there be for the officers of Henry VIII. to destroy it, or disperse it?

The problem as to where Shakspeare gained his extensive knowledge, can never be solved until inquiries in this direction shall be—if ever—satisfactorily answered. The ground, to the best belief of the author, is almost, if not altogether, unbroken ground. Whether the readers of these pages will feel the same conviction that he does, it is not for him

him to know; but, while the most interesting of all inquiries regarding the life of Shakespere still waits for an answer, the author has convinced himself, that if that answer is ever rendered, it will come from Stratford, and not from London;—it will prove that William Shakespere, while a school-boy, with little Latin and less Greek, had nevertheless a thirst for knowledge in his own mother-tongue, a love for acquiring information of the most diversified character, and a marvellous power, or natural gift, for *hiving* his store in the cells of memory, and bringing forth that knowledge, “sweeter than honey or “the honeycomb,” whenever it was required. With a conviction, which nothing but absolute evidence to the contrary would ever shake, the author feels morally certain that at the “school i’ the church” Shakespere had free access to some valuable store of books, whether belonging
to

to the Guild proper, or to the school of the Guild, or to some other library that was contiguous and easily accessible; and that from the same sources at which the thirsting school-boy drank, the man, in his occasional and eventually permanent retirement, drank also. Perhaps there may have been a peculiar charm and attraction for this teacher of mankind in settling at New Place, because its gables and casements were shadowed by the glorious architecture of that Holy Cross Chapel, wherein he had discovered, and ever after fondly sought, those silent teachers—dear and precious books!—the unquarrelling friends, the unchanging companions, the charmers whose charms never fade;—alike welcome to the man in the zenith of literary fame, and to the school-boy with satchel and shining morning face, eagerly seeking (as King Edward named the master of the Stratford School)

School) the Pedagogue and "the school
"i' the church."

Though the remains are very scanty that serve to give us any information regarding Shakespere, it is somewhat remarkable that one of the most valuable relics connected with him should have belonged to his library. One book of Shakespere's, with his autograph on the fly-leaf, exists. It is Montaigne's *Essays*. Amidst the gossip of literature with which the modern Press abounds, it is no small testimony to the worth of such books as Montaigne's *Essays*, and Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, that they stand without rivals to the present hour; approached only by Hallam, by D'Iraeli's "*Curiosities of Literature*," and one or two other works of like character, but unsurpassed by any, in their own quaint

quaint and captivating style of historical anecdote.

That Montaigne should be a favourite author with Shakespere will be readily understood by any one who has studied the minds of the two men. They were both satirists of the eccentricities of human nature. They had both a relish for conceits. They were both philosophers of life. We can well imagine that Montaigne would be as valued on the shelves of New Place, as Charles Lamb describes a new book to have been valued, when it was at last acquired after the careful storing of every spare farthing, and carried home in triumph to his sister !

Shakespere's one book ! And such a book ! What more humorous, instructive, entertaining, and improving companion could a man need than Montaigne's *Essays* ? Leaving to Mr.
Emerson

Emerson and Mr. St. John the task of apologising for the occasionally eccentric tendency of the Gascon's fancy—remembering the fashion of the times in which he lived, and the vernacular even of courts and kings, which in modern days would make the hair of society stand on end—we might be permitted to arrange in imagination the bookshelves of New Place, and with the single vertebra of a library—Montaigne's *Essays*—proceed to the formation of the body of Shakespere's fireside literature, as Professor Owen constructs an animal upon the authority of a bone. Astonishing as the number of works is which Caxton contrived to produce between the publication of the “*Game of Chess*,” in 1474, and his death in 1491—the year before Sir Hugh Clopton was Lord Mayor of London—equalling as much as five thousand closely printed folio pages, this leaping of the giant in the womb of time

time (as Mr. Hallam called it) was nothing in comparison with the production of books during the seventy years that intervened between the date of Caxton's death and Shakespere's birth. The great printer's favourite apprentices, Pynson and Wynkyn de Worde, had between them published more than six hundred volumes at the end of the first quarter of the sixteenth century. When once the presses had been established at Oxford and other large provincial towns, the issue averaged seventy-five volumes a year. So that, by the close of the century when Shakespere modelled and furnished his house at New Place, he had the pick of ten thousand volumes published in the English tongue, and could adorn his study either with Cranmer's Bible, published by Grafton, or with one of John Day's; or with that edition of 1551 for which Tindall was strangled, and his body burnt. In addition

addition to this, the retirement of Stratford would be enlivened for him by the arrival of "Mercuries" or "Flying Couriers," in which the latest intelligence from Town would be recorded, and he might see what Heminge and Burbage were about at the Globe.

When speculations are hazarded as to the knowledge of Shakespere, and its sources, it is desirable to have facts of this description recalled to mind. We ordinarily labour under the impression that books were very scarce in Shakespere's days; and if we may take Lord Macaulay's celebrated picture of England's country houses in the time of Charles II. as something like the truth, we may make a pretty fair guess at what would be the amount of intellectual food enjoyed by the gentry and squires of Warwickshire just one century earlier. If, between 1660 and 1665, "the difficulty and ex-
"pense

“ pense of carrying large packets from
 “ place to place was so great that an ex-
 “ tensive work was longer in making its
 “ way from Paternoster Row to Devon-
 “ shire or Lancashire than it now is in
 “ reaching Kentucky,” and “ few
 “ Knights of the Shire had libraries so
 “ good as may now perpetually be found
 “ in a servants’ hall,” the subject of rural
 intellectuality would be depressing in-
 deed, on glancing backwards one hundred
 years prior to such Bœotian darkness, were
 it not that the crab-like movement in this
 instance would be positive progress, since
 there can be no question that learning
 degraded in England between the dates
 1560 and 1660.

Upon Shakespere’s classical knowledge,
 or mastery of languages, there is little to
 be said, or that needs to be said since the
 publication of Dr. Farmer’s (the Master
 of Emmanuel College, Cambridge,)

“ Essay

“ Essay on the Learning of Shakespere.” That exhaustive pamphlet, Malone candidly admitted, was overwhelming in its evidence, and conclusive, that the Poet’s classical plays and poems were not constructed upon a knowledge of the classic authors, but upon translations of those authors. Whether Ben Jonson ever uttered the slighting words attributed to him or not, he would be a rampant enthusiast indeed who would dare to contravene the truth of the words themselves. Nothing can be more conclusive of Shakespere’s mere schoolboy knowledge of Latin than his absurd misquotation from Lily’s Grammar of a line which, for the purpose of example, is given one way in the grammar, but runs very differently in the “ Eunu-
“ chus ” of Terence, from which, had our Poet really been quoting, he would have quoted correctly. In
the

the *Taming of the Shrew*, we read
(Act i. Scene 1)—

TRANIO. *Master, it is no time to chide you now ;
Affection is not rated from the heart :
If love have touch'd you, naught remains but so,—
"Redime te captum quam queas minimo."*

In the original ("Eunuchus," I. i. 29)
the passage stands thus:—

PHÆDRIA. *Nec quid agam, scio.*
PARMENO. *Quid agas? Nisi ut te redimas
captum quam queas*
Minimo: si nequeas paululo, at quanti queas
Et ne te afflictes.
PHÆDRIA. *Itane suades, &c., &c.*

The truth was that Shakespere had
learnt Lily's Grammar at school (with
its "Epistle" and directions by Cardinal
Wolfey).

We have no possible reason for sup-
posing that he ever pretended to scholar-
ship. He put into the mouth of Tranio
a line with which, in his day, every
schoolboy was familiar; but from whence
derived,

derived, it is very probable, Shakespere neither knew nor cared. Probably, with his keen humour, no one could have enjoyed a laugh more than he, could he have listened to the rubbish which Shakesperian "scholars" have talked about the classical knowledge of a man who was too honest even to pretend to any familiarity with the Greek and Latin poets.

The well-worn story of Mr. Hales, of Eton, filtering through the works of Rowe, Dryden, and Gilrow, is equally honourable to Mr. Hales, and probably close to the truth.

Rowe writes: "In a conversation between Sir John Suckling, Sir William D'Avenant, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales, of Eton, and Ben Jonson, Sir John Suckling, who was a professed admirer of Shakespere, had undertaken his defence against Ben Jonson with some warmth; Mr. Hales, who had
" fat

“ fat still for some time told them,
 “ *‘That if Mr. Shakspeare had not read*
 “ *‘the ancients, he had likewise not stolen*
 “ *‘anything from them; and that if he*
 “ *‘would produce any one topick finely*
 “ *‘treated by any one of them, he would*
 “ *‘undertake to show something upon the*
 “ *‘same subject at least as well written by*
 “ *‘Shakspeare.’*”

Fifteen years before Rowe's Life of
 Shakespere had been published, Gildon's
 Letters and Essays (in 1694) told the
 story. “The enemies of Shakespere
 “ would by no means yield him so much
 “ excellence: so that it came to a reso-
 “ lution of a trial of skill upon that sub-
 “ ject. The place agreed on for the dis-
 “ pute was Mr. Hale's chamber at Eton.
 “ A great many books were sent down by
 “ the enemies of this Poet; and on the
 “ appointed day, my Lord Falkland, Sir
 “ John Suckling, and all the persons of
 “ quality

“ quality that had wit and learning, and
“ interested themselves in the quarrel,
“ met there; and, upon a thorough dis-
“ quisition of the point, the judges,
“ chosen by agreement out of this learned
“ and ingenious assembly, unanimously
“ gave the preference to Shakspeare,
“ and the Greek and Roman poets were
“ adjudged to vail at least their glory in
“ that to the English hero.”

Dryden's allusion to the story (“ Essay
“ on Dramatic Poesy,” 1667,) is as fol-
lows: “ The consideration of this made
“ Mr. Hales, of Eton, say, ‘ that there
“ ‘ was no subject of which any poet ever
“ ‘ writ, but he would produce it much
“ ‘ better done by Shakspeare.’ ”

The “ ever-memorable ” John Hales
was a scholar of distinguished European
reputation, and, therefore, he must have
been as familiar with the Greek and Latin
poets as with Shakespere. He was one

of

of those ripe and broadly read scholars—not thick as blackberries even in the nineteenth century—who are as familiar with the poetry of their own country as with that of the ancients. History has assured us of this: and how very few there are like him! How very few those who can “cap verses” in that highest range of literary knowledge, where Terence, Horace, Sophocles, and Euripides, can be instantly answered by the quotation of a kindred line from Spenser, Shakespere, or Milton. Hales was one of these few athletes of scholarship, and therefore his opinion is worthy of all consideration, while his celebrated victory deserves to make him, as Malone prayed he might remain, “ever-memorable.”

The mental gymnastics thus performed in Mr. Hale’s room at Eton, seem to point out very distinctly the strength and the weakness of Shakespere! “If he
“had

“had not read the ancients!” What then? Mr. Hales knew he had not. Deeply read himself in the classics, he knew that his favourite was not so. But, what then? Point out any moral, any philosophic reflection, any noble and elevating sentiment, produced by the ancient poets, and “I will produce it much better done by Shakspeare,” said Mr. Hales.

From the crucible to which Dr. Farmer subjected the writings of Shakespere, they came forth purged from that alloy of silly eulogy which was a dross, giving to the Poet what never belonged to him, and depreciating the pure coinage uttered by his brilliant brain. The marvel of Shakespere’s works is in the beauties that are all his own. The prodigality of his genius may in some degree be estimated when one of England’s greatest scholars challenges the ancient poets, and declares himself

himself ready to “cap” any sentiment of their verse by a similar sentiment, equally well or better expressed in Shakespere. And who, in the trial, wins the victory? Let it be granted frankly that Shakespere, in writing his *Troilus and Cressida*, followed Caxton’s History of Troy; that he borrowed from Plutarch; that he read Hollinshed in order to construct *Richard III.*; that he studied a translation of Belleforest before he wrote *Hamlet*! — Let the same sort of facts be quoted against *Henry IV.*, *Richard II.*, and all the historical plays: and what does it amount to? Both the closet and the stage are witnesses to the truth, that the more “historical” the Poet is — the more he depends upon and adheres to chronicles or legends — the less powerful he is. Those plays are the least popular which are the most historical, for the simple reason
that

that where he has to trace the history of a reign in the cramped limits of a play, he is necessarily fettered, and the scope of the Poet's fancy is more or less subjected to the inevitable rehearsal of facts. How different is it in the unapproached perfection of treatment, progressive development of plot, and poetry of diction in *Othello* and *Macbeth*. In those, as in *Hamlet*, and *Romeo*, and *King Lear*, a scheme of the play has been derived from ancient writers, or translations, but nothing more. The genius of the Poet has been left free to portray character, and to clothe sentiment with words as no other poet ever did.

There is every difference between learning and language. Shakespere's knowledge was not a knowledge of language, but it was the knowledge of learning. It is highly probable that he never derived a single classical incident, allusion, or story

story, direct from a classical author. It is equally probable that he never in his life read a Greek play, and knew no more of Terence than he had learnt of him in Lily's Grammar!

The more we realise these facts (for they are facts), and the more surprising the learning of the Poet becomes, he does not thereby sink, but rather rises in our admiration. We strip him of pretensions—*post-mortem* honours to which he laid no claim—and regard him solely as what he is, the Poet of England, and uttering in English verse the thoughts gathered from, or suggested by, English literature.

We have seen that there were ten thousand volumes published in English during the century in which he flourished, and that every year contributed largely to the information of studious men. Whatever truth there may be in

Macaulay's

Macaulay's strictures upon the ignorance prevailing in the reign of Charles II., the business of Shakespere's life involved reading and study. And although it is true that the circulation of books in the rural districts of England may have been very slow, still this objection would not be any impediment to Shakespere, who, living constantly in London, and travelling to and fro between Stratford and town, would have ample opportunity to take down with him into the country any books which he wished to read. Chronological tables of the order in which his plays were written, founded upon internal evidence, dates of performance, or of publication, have frequently been published. Such tables are after all conjectural, and it is no proof of the date when a play was written, to learn when it was printed or played. In the absence of demonstration, the conjectures of

Malone

Malone and Chalmers attribute, the one seven, the other eleven plays to Shakespere prior to his purchase of New Place in 1597. The far more satisfactory, because positive, facts which Mr. C. Knight gives us, show that only three plays had been published prior to 1597. With a very trifling amount of exception it may, therefore, be stated that the mass of his plays were written during his tenancy of New Place; and all the greatest, without doubt, during the latter period of his life. Within sixteen years thirty-four plays of Shakespere's were either printed or spoken of in print, giving us an average of two plays a year; their actual publication, or direct allusion to them in particular years, being as follows:—

In 1597	.	.	.	.	3	Plays.
„ 1598	.	.	.	.	8	„
„ 1600	.	.	.	.	5	„
„ 1602	.	.	.	.	3	„

In

In 1603	.	.	.	.	1	Play.
„ 1604	.	.	.	.	1	„
„ 1607	.	.	.	.	2	„
„ 1609	.	.	.	.	2	„
„ 1611	.	.	.	.	2	„
„ 1613	.	.	.	.	1	„

It is very remarkable that, according to this list, the Poet worked the hardest during the year he became possessed of New Place, and for the four or five years subsequent. It seems natural to conclude that Shakespere purchased New Place with a view to making it his literary sanctum; for it is impossible to resist connecting with the purchase, the fecundity of his pen. Let us only consider the character of work in which he was employed when in London, and let any man so engaged answer whether it would be possible for Shakespere, regularly employed at Blackfriars or the Globe, rehearsing and performing, to study the plots and produce the MSS. of eight or five tragedies and comedies per annum. If he could have

have done so, he would have been a far greater prodigy than the world has ever yet accounted him. Such an Herculean labour of mind and body is beyond the capacity of any human being. But if we attach the purchase of New Place to Shakespere's success as a play-writer, and contemplate him withdrawing there from the excitement and bustle of Blackfriars to produce the *Merchant of Venice*, and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, then that garden, and the slender remains of the foundations of his house seem to become doubly precious to Englishmen. As time wears on his labours slacken; but almost to the end he continues bringing forth from the treasures of his mind the immortal works which gild his fame. The opinion of many writers has been that Shakespere was undomesticated, and that he rarely visited Stratford. Humbly, but confidently, the writer embraces a
directly

directly opposite opinion. To him it appears impossible that Shakespere could have accomplished the literary work he produced, immersed in the business and distracting engagements of Blackfriars or the Globe. Circumstances seem to give credit to the supposition that a larger amount of his time was spent at New Place than is commonly estimated; and as to his being undomesticated, or unhappy in his home, such an uncharitable and purely conjectural idea has not even as much respectability as the mare's-nest which De Quincey discovered in the marriage license. The minds that give welcome to the one notion will, most likely, cherish the other.

Instead of Shakespere residing in London and occasionally visiting Stratford, it may be much nearer the truth to say that he lived the latter years of his life chiefly at New Place, and only visited London at those

those periods of the year when his presence was absolutely necessary. The probabilities are strongly in favour of this opinion, and there is no evidence to the contrary. For the last eighteen years of his life he is presented to our imagination as the master of New Place. He is not to be regarded during those years enjoying retirement and repose, like many of the great men who have followed him in his profession, as Garrick at Hampton, John Kemble at Laufanne, or Macready at Sherborne and Cheltenham.

The "silver livery of advised age," which it was permitted the two first—and long may it be allowed to the third—to wear, was never donned by Shakespere. He died in the freshness and vigour of life; and, as we know of a certainty, continued actively employed until the close of his existence. It is saddening to think how little associated with his private life remains

remains to us. A letter, a will, a deed, a book—and that is all ! How different the fate of the master and his apprentices. There are happily preserved to us the chief incidents in the life of Garrick ; and many articles of personal property belonging to him, which are highly prized. When Shakespere was dead a hundred years, scarce a trace of him remained. A few stories gathered from gossips hung about his track in Stratford ; but anything actually associated with him would have been as hard to discover there, as the Philosopher's Stone. The hundred years was only just completed, when the house in which he had lived and died was razed to the ground. The descendants of his sister, Joan Hart, as the pedigree shows, have reached down to our own days. Possibly some of them may still exist in the neighbourhood of Tewkesbury or Gloucester. To Joan he bequeathed not
only

only his house in Henley Street, and twenty pounds, but also "all my wearing apparel."

What would the world now give to see a suit of wearing apparel that had been worn by Shakespere? If the coat of Napoleon in the Louvre, or of Nelson in Greenwich Hospital, attracts the attention of tens of thousands, what would be the value of and interest in the black gown, "garded with velvet and faced with cony;" the ruddy coloured hose, the cassock, the jerkin, the "fryze bryches," the rapier, and "the hat of a certain kind of fine haire, fetched from beyond the seas, which they call 'bever hatte.'"?*

Shakespere's wardrobe must have been stocked with articles of this description. They were all left to his sister; and his sister's descendants certainly survived to the

* Fairholt's "Costume in England," p. 216 (1860, Ed.)

the end of the last century. It would have seemed natural for them to have preserved some of the costume of the Poet, but there is not a trace of anything of the sort.

In the same way he bequeathed to Mr. Thomas Combe his sword. The pedigree shows us how the Combe property passed into the Clopton family, by the marriage of Martha Combe with Edward Clopton. What would his countrymen not give to recover Shakespere's sword? Its preservation would have been most easy. If the sword of the Conqueror could be preserved in the family of the late Sir Godfrey Webster, with the Roll of Battle, down to the middle of the last century, and only then perished through the misfortune of a fire, why could not the Combes and Cloptons have preserved Shakespere's sword? Why might it not have been deposited ere this
in

in some national treasury? If there is an article of use which has the quality of defying accident and time, it is a sword. Very probably Shakespere's sword still exists, but has been lost or sold! Who knows whether it may not have been among the furniture and chattels sold off by Mr. Battersbee, previous to the demolition of Stratford College, the residence of the Combes?

What became of the broad silver-gilt bowl bequeathed to Judith Shakespere—Mrs. Quiney? What became of the “chattels, plate, jewels, and household “stuff” bequeathed to Dr. Hall and Mrs. Hall? These would naturally descend to Lady Barnard; and at her decease would continue in the use of Sir John Barnard, until his death in 1673. Neither Lady Barnard's will, nor the indenture relating to her property, make any mention of Shakespere's heir-looms. The
broad

broad silver-gilt bowl, the plate, the jewels, all vanish from sight. Articles of this description do not perish or consume away. They may exist now in as excellent preservation as in 1616! If so, what has become of them? Unless the silver bowl was sold by the Quineys, and melted down, it would most probably be engraved with a crest, or a monogram, or some device whereby it could be recognised. Is it yet too late to institute a search for such an invaluable relic of the Poet? A man of Sir John Barnard's station would naturally leave plate, jewels, and property, to his heirs or relatives. It is said that this family has died out within a very short time at *Abingdon, in Berkshire*. If such is the fact, family heir-looms do not descend to the grave: they pass to some one. If the inquiry has not yet been diligently made, it is well worth while to know in what direction

rection the Barnard property has gone ; and to trace—failing direct male descent—the female issue, and the marriages which may have carried property into other families. It seems impossible but that Elizabeth Hall must have inherited the plate and jewels which belonged to her grandfather ; and as she makes no direct mention of them in her will, it is natural to suppose they continued in possession of her husband.

We see Shakespere's personal property divided among his children and his sister : to one his wardrobe is bequeathed, to another his plate, to another his broad silver bowl, and to Thomas Combe his sword ! It is hard to believe that a man valued during his lifetime as Shakespere was, and immortalised so quickly after his death, should be held in the least esteem by those of his own household. It is hard to think that no one belonging
to

to him should desire to preserve the mementoes which he had particularly bequeathed to them in his will. And yet the fact stares us in the face that not a single heir-loom of the Poet has been handed down, by any one branch of his family, to the present day! All, all are lost and gone, save one book, the preservation of which has been purely accidental!

Rowe, who acknowledges himself indebted to Betterton for a considerable part of the passages relating to the Poet's life introduced in his Biography (published 1709), informs us that Betterton's "veneration for the memory of Shakespere . . . engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire, on purpose to gather up what remains he could of a name which he had in so great veneration." Considering that Betterton was born in 1635—the same year in which Dr.

John

John Hall died—and that his daughter survived until 1669, when Betterton was thirty-four years of age,—and considering also that she was eight years of age when her grandfather died, and therefore perfectly able to speak of him from her own recollection,—it does seem extraordinary that the remains which Betterton went to Stratford to gather up were so scanty. He would find Shakespere's children all dead, but his residence in the possession of his grandchild, who, though living at Abington, was probably an occasional visitor to her property in Stratford. Had he even made her acquaintance, with what a fund of information might Rowe's Life have been enriched! and what treasures connected with the Poet might have been chronicled, and possibly preserved, through his interest! But the fates seem to have ordered it otherwise. The Poet had not been dead twenty
years

years when Betterton was born; and within half a century of Shakespere's decease, this venerator of his memory probably visited Stratford. From that place he does not seem to have brought back with him a single memento of the Poet; or to have seen his sword, his silver bowl, his books, or any of his chattels, at a description of which the ears of every antiquary in England would now tingle, while to recover one of them would make any present discoverer famous.

Fifty years, and the treasures of the Poet were unnoticed or unknown! One hundred years, and the domestic associations of his pupil and interpreter, David Garrick, are as freshly and carefully preserved as if he had been in their midst yesterday! Within a mile of one another, at Hampton and Hampton Court, are two residences, which,
so

so long as they exist, will be for ever associated with Shakespere and Garrick. Thanks to Mr. Peter Cunningham's timely discovery in the Audit Office of the "Revel's Booke," we now know when "Shaxberd's" *Plaie of Errors*, his *Marchant of Venis*, his *Mesur for Mesur*, and his *Merry Wives of Winsor*, were performed before James I. We know with certainty of two noble chambers—and those royal chambers—in which Shakespere was seen and heard, and of none other; for though it would be almost a profanity to disturb the tradition which identifies the house in Henley Street, Stratford, as the birthplace of the Poet, there is no absolute certainty of such being the case. The Banqueting House, at Whitehall, and the misnamed "Wolsey's Hall," at Hampton Court, wherein Shakespere's company performed before the king in the winters of 1603 and 1604, are

are chambers for ever associated with the history of England ; and not among their minor associations is the recollection that in them the King of England listened to the Poet's plays—saw the Poet himself as one of the players—and “ bestowed especial honour upon Shakespeare,” in “ an amicable letter.” The letter was in the possession of Sir William Davenant as reported, and there seems no reason to question the truth of the report. But whether it be true or not, there is no question regarding the enactment of the tragedies and comedies before the Court at Whitehall and Hampton. We are thus enabled to interweave the memory of our Poet with two structures utterly dissimilar in architectural detail, but each a princely pile, and each closely connected with the most stirring events of history.

Prince Charles, a child of four years
of

of age, may have sported at the King's knee, and witnessed the deed of blood done by the Moor in the same hall through which he was to pass to a darker deed of blood years afterwards. The history of that Palace of Whitehall is familiar to every schoolboy, but not so familiar that of the two halls which have adorned the Palace of Hampton Court. For contrast, for light and shade in historical painting, what four pictures of sunshine and shower could be more dramatic than a vigorous representation of Wolsey's Banqueting Hall, as it must have appeared when he entertained the French Ambassador,—when the Court Revels was held there after the accession of James, and Shakespere performed in the hall which now occupies the same site as Wolsey's, which was most probably designed by him, but not erected until the 22nd Henry VIII., six years after the
Cardinal

Cardinal had left the Palace for ever;—and on the opposite or shadowed side of the picture, when Mary inhabited the Court, listening to the masses and prayers of her priests, praying for her safe deliverance of an heir to the throne of the realm, which was never destined to be born; or when Cromwell, in his domestic gloom, paced up and down that Hall, listening to the music of the “box of whistles,” which Puritanic opinion thought too Popish for the chapel of Magdalen College, but was a fit instrument, erected in the Minstrel’s Gallery at Hampton, to soothe the throbbing breast of the Lord Protector.

George Cavendish describes Wolsey’s entertainment to the Ambassador of Francis I. Nearly three hundred bedrooms were fitted up to receive his suite, each provided with a basin and ewer of silver, wine and beer vessels of silver, bowls, goblets, and silver sconces.

At

At the banquet, bouffets stretched across the end of the Hall, having six shelves one above the other, crowded with gold and silver plate. During the second course the Lord Cardinal came in, booted and spurred, and giving all welcome, took a golden bowl filled with hypocras, and drank to the health of his Sovereign Lord and of the King of France. What a contrast to the spectacle witnessed on the same spot in the following century, when the King-killer, quivering with emotion as his child lay dead in an adjoining chamber, wandered in his solitude about that Palace! There Mary likewise had wandered in her solitude! and there, too, Charles had passed some of his bitterest days! Strange associations these, with the Hall in which Shakespere and his company had performed before Charles's father, and perchance in Charles's presence!

The

The destruction of New Place, and the loss and destruction of every article of personal property that the Poet bequeathed to his family, excepting one book,—Florio's translated edition of Montaigne (1603), with his signature inscribed,—must for ever remain a matter of the deepest regret. We only know of six signatures of Shakespere. All, save one, are appended to legal documents. The autograph in Montaigne is the only scrap of writing by the Poet which associates us with him in his literary life. However valuable his signature may be, a far higher value attaches to his writing in a book that was one of his companions and friends, and possessed a place in his home, than the mere execution of a hard, dry, legal document. A very interesting account of Shakespere's copy of Montaigne was written by Sir Frederick Madden, which states that it was purchased

chased in 1838 for the British Museum, from the Rev. Edward Patten, of East Sheen, and had belonged to his father, the Rev. Edward Patten, of Smethwick, near Birmingham, by whom, previous to the year 1780, the volume used to be exhibited as a treasure, on account of its containing the autograph of Shakespere. In other words, the book and its autograph were shown with pride, *and not for sale*, prior to Ireland's forgeries, and the vulgar attempts to imitate Shakespere's signature by such impostors as Jordan, "*the Poet of Stratford*," save the mark!

Sir Frederick Madden says, and says properly, "the present autograph challenges and defies suspicion." The book of itself is interesting, apart from its connection with Shakespere; and as it is a treasure which can only be inspected by special leave, it may be well to publish its title.

THE
ESSAYS,

OR

MORALL, POLITIKE, AND MILLITARIE
DISCOURSES,

OF

LO: MICHAELL DE MONTAIGNE,

KNIGHT,

*Of the Noble Order of ST. MICHAELL, and one of the GENTLEMEN
IN ORDINARY of the French King, HENRY THE THIRD,
his Chamber.*

The First Booke.

(* * *)

First written by him in *French*,
and
Now done into *English*

By

By him that hath inviolably vowed his labours to the
Æternitie of their Honors,
Whose names he hath severally inscribed on these his
consecrated Altares.

The First Booke.

To the Right Honorable
LUCIE, CO : OF BEDFORD,
and
LADIE ANNE HARRINGTON,
Her Ho. Mother.

The Second Booke.

To the Right Honorable
ELIZABETH, CO : OF RUTLAND,
and
LADY PENELOPE RICHE.

The Third Booke.

To the Right Honorable
LADIE ELIZABETH GREY,
and
LADIE MARIE NEVILL.

JOHN FLORIO.

¶ Printed at London, by VAL. SIMS and EDWARD
BLOUNT, dwelling in Paules Churchyard. 1603.

That Shakespere was familiar with this translation is put beyond all doubt by the fact that, in Act ii., Scene 2, of the *Tempest*, he quotes from it almost word for word:—

*“I the commonwealth, I would by contraries
Execute all things: for no kind of traffic
Would I admit; no name of magistrate;
Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,
And use of service, none; contract, succession,
Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
No occupation; all men idle, all;
And women too; but innocent and pure.”*

The passage thus quoted, in Florio, Book i., Chap. 30, runs as follows:—
Speaking of a newly discovered country, which he calls Antartick France, Montaigne observes:—“It is a nation—would
“I answer Plato—that hath *no kind of*
“*traffike; no knowledge of letters; no in-*
“*telligence of numbers; no name of*
“*magistrate, nor of politike superioritie;*
“*no use of service, of riches, or of poverty;*
“*no contracts; no successions; no divi-*
“*dences;*

“ dences; *no occupation, but idle*; no
 “ respect of kindred, but common; no
 “ apparell, but naturall; no manuring of
 “ lands; *no use of wine, corne, or*
 “ *mettle,*” &c.

That the volume in question belonged to a library in Shakespere's time, its binding shows, particularly in the Tudor-fashioned *fleur-de-lis* and crown ornamentation with which the leather is stamped.

That the volume belonged to Shakespere himself, the autograph which “ challenges and defies suspicion ” proves.

Having re-afferted Sir Frederick Madden's words, it would be unfair not to quote the following passage from Mr. Halliwell's “ Life of William Shakespere,” pp. 280-81 :—

“ It is unnecessary to say that many alleged autographs
 “ of Shakespere have been exhibited ; but forgeries of
 “ them are so numerous, and the continuity of design,
 “ which a fabricator could not produce in a long document,
 “ is so easy to obtain in a mere signature, that the
 “ only safe course is, to adopt none as genuine on internal
 “ evidence

“evidence. A signature in a copy of Florio’s translation of Montaigne, 1609, is open to this objection. The verbal evidence as to its existence only extends as far back as 1780, after the publication of Stevens’ fac-simile of the last autograph in the will, of which it may be a copy with intentional variations.”

Mr. Halliwell’s general accuracy makes an error, in what he says of this book, remarkable; and excites the suspicion that, in his scepticism, he may have disdained to give the book that honourable consideration which it really deserves. He says, “translation of Montaigne, 1609.” The title above given will show that the date is 1603. The error is hardly worth notice in itself, but well worth it when fallen into by a gentleman to whose painstaking and searching accuracy we are so greatly indebted. It awakens an impression that Florio’s Montaigne may be worthy of a closer examination than it has yet received, and may perhaps contain more interesting evidence in favour of its having belonged to Shakespere than
has

has as yet been shown. For instance, Sir Frederick Madden, in his description of the book, notices the manuscript notes which are found in it, and the quotations and references on the fly-leaves at the beginning and ending of the volume. He states that he had at first hoped these notes might have proved to be in the handwriting of Shakespere, but on examination he concluded they were written at some period later than Shakespere's time, though not much later, as the character of the writing proves. There Sir Frederick leaves the matter. But it is well worth while to take the book in hand, and resume its examination at the point where Sir Frederick has dropped it. On the fly-leaf are Italian quotations, references to the classic poets, and references to subjects in the book. These prove that the writer was a literary man and a classical scholar. Taking up the references, and
turning

turning to the body of the work, we find the margins annotated in several places, and Montaigne's Latin quotations verified or corrected. Sometimes a wrong author's name is given : if so, the annotations correct the press. Sometimes a quotation is given without the name of the author : if so, the annotation throws in " Livy," " Virgil," or some other classical name—such a book, such a line. We are thus put beyond all doubt that the writer was some scholar who had the classical poets, as we say, at his fingers' ends. But here comes the marvel of the matter. Upon the edges of the leaves is printed with pen and ink the name A. HALES.

Hales ! Is it possible that the connection of that name with Shakespere entirely escaped the recollection of Sir Frederick Madden, and all other examiners of the book ? Did no one remember the Poet's champion at Eton, who
Lord

Lord Clarendon declared “ was one of the
“ least men in the kingdom, and one of
“ the greatest scholars in Europe.” Sir
Frederick is perfectly correct in stating
that the orthography in the volume,
though not Shakespere’s, belongs to a date
of the Shakesperian age. When we link
together these facts—that Mr. Hales, of
Eton, was the Poet’s enthusiastic ad-
mirer; that he was a profound scholar,
and therefore the very man who would
supply the names of classic authors to
quotations, and correct errors of reference
to them, or inscribe on a fly-leaf a parallel
passage from some Italian poet; that if
there was a sale of Shakespere’s goods and
chattels at New Place, his books would
be precisely the memorials of the man
which Mr. Hales would covet and pur-
chase; that a volume containing his
autograph would be a prize eagerly
fought and religiously preserved; that
such

such a work would be read and annotated by Mr. Hales with the intensest pleasure; and that the name "Hales" is actually inscribed upon the edges of the leaves,—it does seem that a strong testimony to the value of the book has been overlooked, and that a most interesting piece of internal evidence as to its historic value has been unappreciated. It is true that it falls short of absolute proof; but the links of the chain couple themselves so naturally, and the probabilities are so strongly in favour of this book having belonged to Mr. Hales, that if such evidence recommends itself to the minds of those who read these pages, Florio's Montaigne must be regarded henceforth with a heightened interest; and just as we regard the book from having passed into the possession of such a man as Mr. Hales, must its preservation by him be an additional testimony—if such were needed—

needed—in favour of the authenticity of the autograph of Shakespere.

Let Hales be “ever-memorable,” said Malone, because of his defence of Shakespere. Will he not deserve to be “ever-memorable,” indeed, if it should prove that to his love and reverence we are indebted for the preservation of the only known article of property that belonged to Shakespere?

Thoroughly convinced of the genuineness of the autograph, and strongly impressed with the belief that after Shakespere's death his goods and chattels were sold, and that this book passed into the possession of Mr. Hales, of Eton, Florio's Montaigne is regarded by the author as the solitary “*In memoriam*” of New Place. New Place is swept away; the great house has vanished; the Poet's sword is lost; the plate and jewels are destroyed or sold, or lost likewise; the
broad

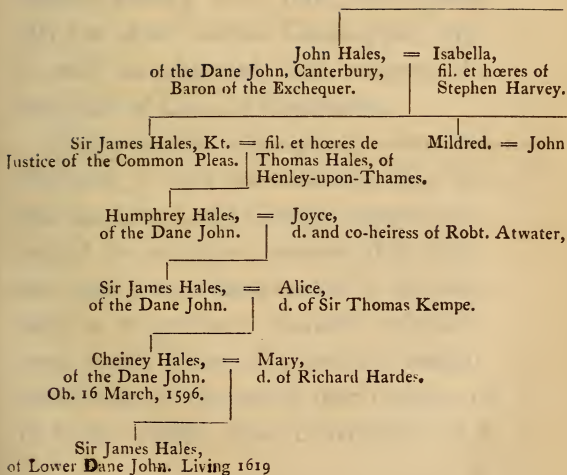
broad silver-gilt bowl is—melted down perhaps; but one treasure is spared to us, better than plate or jewels, because it is associated with the Poet's play of the *Tempest*,—because it bears his autograph,—because, being a book, it is a memento most kindred to him who has given to the world, superior to all other products of the human intellect, the Book of books,—and because, having belonged to his library, we know how he must have valued it—

*“ Me, poor man ! my library
Was dukedom large enough.”*

The attention of the reader has been especially called to the name of “ Charles Hales,” as one of the commissioners of the inquisition for inquiry regarding the estate of Ambrose, Earl of Warwick. It will be observed that in Shakespere's time a Charles Hales is connected with Stratford. Then a John Hales is peculiarly interested

interested in upholding the Poet's fame; and on a book bearing his autograph the name "A. Hales" is found inscribed.

A visit to Heralds' College, and a little of the "Old Mortality" spirit of mural research in Canterbury, Warwick, and Somerset, gives us information of considerable interest, and seems to the author to add value to the folio of Montaigne. The fact is, the Hales family was connected with Snitterfield, and one branch of it was seated there both before and after Shakespere's time. This distinguished stock, which yielded so many servants to the Crown in the high offices of the law, belonged, *ex stirpe*, to Canterbury, and may be traced as located at the Dane John, or Dungeon, of that city, at Hales Place, at Tenterden, and elsewhere. By reference to the appended Pedigree, it will be seen how the junior descents of this house became seated at
Coventry,



Coventry, at Newland near Coventry, and at Snitterfield. John Hales (A) acquired the celebrated Priory of Coventry, which singularly enough had been granted by patent of Henry VIII., dated 28th July, 37th anno., to John Combes, Esq., and Richard Stansfield, their heirs, &c. From them it passed to this John Hales, in the 15th of Elizabeth. He died seised thereof, leaving it to John, his nephew (B), son of his brother Christopher, who, it will be observed, had married the daughter of Lucy of Charlecote.

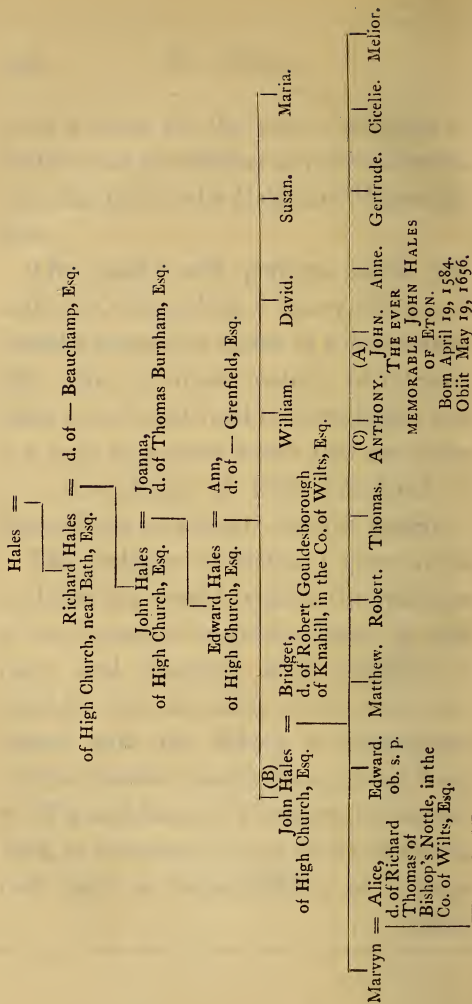
If the reader will glance over this Pedigree, it will be observed that the Haleses, Lucys, and Combes became connected by marriages between their families; and it is of some interest to find that such a magnificent monastic establishment as the Priory of Coventry—magnificent even in the wreck that remains of it to the present time, converted as it is
to

to be a home for the poor—belonged to the father or grandfather of John à Combe, and after him to the Haleses of Warwickshire.

The reader will perhaps accuse the author of taking him a heavy ride across heraldic country to arrive at a very simple fact. But in these matters of research there is no royal road to knowledge, and it is only by patient search that we arrive at a knowledge of facts calculated to throw light on subjects like the present.

The pedigree of Hales, if given in all its branches, would require the insertion of an immense map-like sheet in this place, and therefore it is necessary to exclude such branches as are not connected with the history of Shakespeare. As the Haleses wandered away from Kent to Warwickshire, to Coventry, to Snitterfield, to Newland, so one of the branches took root in Somersetshire, at a place called

PEDIGREE OF A BRANCH OF THE HALES FAMILY. (HALES of High Church, Somerset.)



John.
Ætat. 10, in 1623.

called High Church. To this branch the "ever-memorable John" belonged. His life is familiar to Eton and Oxford men, and to persons interested in Laud, and the Royalist troubles. It is not generally known; and therefore a few words on the subject may not be inopportune, as John Hales has always appeared to the author to have been the first scholar in England who recognised, as it deserves to be recognised, the genius and transcendent superiority of Shakespere to all the poets of ancient or modern days.

He was, as the Pedigree shows (A), the sixth son of John Hales, of High Church (B), and was born in 1584. He matriculated at Corpus Christi College, Oxford, April 16, 1597, and took his B.A. July 9, 1603; was elected Fellow of Merton, October 13, 1606; took his M.A. in 1609; and was admitted Fellow of Eton, May 24, 1613. He accompanied

accompanied Sir Dudley Carlton to the Hague as his chaplain, and was admitted to the Synod of Dort, with reference to which he wrote his "Golden Remains." His connection with the Synod gave a strong Arminian turn to his opinions, and, as he himself expressed it, he "bid "John Calvin good-night."

In February, 1619, John Hales returned from the Synod, and took up his residence in England; but his peculiar theological opinions rendered him obnoxious to Laud, who summoned him to a lengthened interview, in 1638, at Lambeth Palace, when, by mutual explanations, Laud and Hales became reconciled, so that a very short time afterwards the Archbishop, at a public dinner, presented Hales to a canonry at Windsor, into which he was installed June 27, 1639, though in 1642 he was ejected from the same. About the time of
Laud's

Laud's death, 1644, he retired from his rooms in Eton College, and took up his residence in a private chamber in Eton, where he concealed himself for a quarter of a year, in order to preserve the College books and keys, of which he was Burfar. He lived upon bread and beer, and in his concealment was so near the College, that he used to say, "those who searched for him might have smelt him if he had eaten garlick." He refused to take the Covenant, and was consequently regarded as a malignant, and ejected from his fellowship at Eton. There are many conflicting stories about his poverty, and the dire necessity in which he was compelled to sell, for £700, a part of his library to Cornelius Bee, a London book-seller. This statement, however, obtains weight from the confirmation of Dr. Pearson, who wrote the preface to "Golden Remains."

John

John Hales died May 19, 1656, and was buried in Eton College Chapel-yard, where a monument was erected to his memory by P. Curwen, Esq., and in 1765 an edition of his works was published, edited by Lord Hailes.

The following extracts from his will, taken from the Eton College Register, are interesting :—

“ I, JOHN HALES, of Eton, &c. &c., do dispose
“ of the small remainder of my poor and broken
“ estate in manner and form following:—1st. I
“ give to my sister, CICELY COMBES, £5. . . .
“ Moreover all my Greek and Latin books I give
“ to my most deservedly beloved friend, William
“ Salter of Richkings, Esq. . . . All my English
“ books, together with the remainder of all moneys,
“ goods, and utensils whatsoever, I give and be-
“ queathe to Mrs. Hannah Dickenson of Eton,
“ widow, relict of John Dickenson, lately deceased.
“ In whose house . . . I have for a long time been
“ with great care and good respect entertained—
“ and her I do by these presents constitute and or-
“ dain my sole executrix. . . . As for my funeral,
“ I ordain that at the time of the next Evensong
“ after my departure my body be laid in the
“ Church-yard

“ Church-yard of the Town of Eton, . . . in plain
“ and simple manner, without any Sermon, or
“ ringing of the Bell, or calling of the people
“ together, without any unseasonable commessa-
“ tion or computation, . . . for as in my life I have
“ done the Church no service, so I will not that in
“ my death the Church do me any honour.”

It will be observed in the above detailed facts, that John Hales had taken his degree at Corpus Christi College thirteen years before Shakespere died, and that he was a Fellow of Eton three years prior to that event. Also, that — doubtless owing to the family connection with Snitterfield—Cicely Hales, his sister, had married into the family of Combe ; and lastly, that John Hales’s younger brother was named Anthony Hales (C). When we come to put all these facts together, there can be little doubt as to the origin of John Hales’s peculiarly strong interest in Shakespere ; and the ink-printed name A. HALES, on the edges of the leaves of
the

the copy of Montaigne, gives additional value to that already most valuable volume ; because we gather from that name, and from the scholarly comments and notes in the book, that John Hales, after Shakespere's death, had possession of this work,—had annotated it with his own erudition,—and that from him the book passed to the possession of his brother Anthony ! It appears to the author that this circumstantial evidence is as convincing as any such evidence can be, short of a positive entry on the fly-leaf to that effect. That the book should have remained in families connected with Warwickshire, is most natural ; and that it should belong to a clergyman in the same neighbourhood in 1780, is precisely what we should expect. Let it be remembered that Mr. Patten exhibited the book to his friends as bearing the Poet's signature for no mercenary purpose, and
with

with no view of making a sale of it. He valued it as it deserved, and sacredly preserved it. His son was induced to part with it to the British Museum, because it was urged on him that such a book ought to be deposited in the National library.

The reader, and particularly the antiquary, will pardon this lengthened diversion regarding the “ever-memorable “John” and his family; for, believing, as the author does, that the name A. HALES has enticed him into a research which he would otherwise have overlooked, so he believes it has furnished additional evidence in support of Sir Frederick Madden’s paper, and—if such were needed—confirmed the authenticity of the autograph in the only remaining book that belonged to the Poet.

Until faith can be driven by overpowering proofs into the wildest infidelity,
let

let us cling to the belief that the autograph is genuine, and that this volume did belong to our Shakespere. Should that last plank, which floats us over the gulf of separation that has gone on widening for more than three hundred years, ever drift away, and leave us utterly cut asunder from the domestic life of the man, we shall still have, in two of the Palatial Halls of England, monuments that must be for ever associated with the genius and glory of the High Priest of literature.

A mile away from the Hall in which Shakespere charmed his King and the Court, is the Villa to which one of his chief interpreters, David Garrick, retired, after leaving his profession. It is now fast approaching a century since he too shuffled off this mortal coil! Half a century after Shakespere's death, all the tangible associations connected with him seem to have perished, or to have been removed
from

from Stratford! Not so at Garrick's Villa, when a whole century is well-nigh complete since his death. His Villa, his garden, his river-side pleasure-grounds, his temple erected to Shakespere, remain as he left them. There is the lawn skirting the Thames, overhung with noble trees, which Garrick showed with delight to Dr. Johnson, and received from the Doctor, as he surveyed the beauty of the scene, the moralising rejoinder, "Ah, David, these are the "things that make Death terrible!"* There is the tunnel under the road, suggested by the Doctor;—"Well, David, "if you cannot get over the road, "try and get under it." There is the drawing-room with the Chinese-patterned

* This anecdote was told me by the Rev. Edward Phillips, of Surbiton, to whose family Garrick's Villa now belongs. The story is associated with the place, and is possibly now published for the first time.

terned papering, the palm-tree fashioned fireplaces, the chairs and sofas, exactly as he left them. There is his bedroom, with its presses, its furniture, its bed, and chintz hangings, so long delayed in passing the Customs, that David assured his Majesty's officers Mrs. Garrick was breaking her heart over their delay. Could Garrick return to Hampton and re-visit his home to-morrow, he would find it, its furniture and appointments, as if he had only left it yesterday. The reverential spirit in which this Villa has been preserved, and the furniture of Garrick's drawing-room and bedroom respected, is above all praise. In the lapse of time, through whatever hands the property may pass, let us hope that centuries to come will find these chambers exactly as they are now, at the close of the first century since the great tragedian's death. But how painful is the contrast
between

between the conservative action exhibited at Hampton, and the deplorable, nay, wicked, neglect, which prevailed at Stratford !

A volume of such interest and importance as Montaigne's " *Essays*," published in 1603, is precisely the sort of work which we should expect to find on Shakespere's bookshelf. Florio's translation recommends itself *because it is a translation*, since it has been satisfactorily proved to us that Shakespere's knowledge was largely, if not entirely, gathered from translations of Classical, French, and Italian authors ; and, moreover,—the character of Montaigne's mind being peculiarly calculated to interest Shakespere,—had the volume in question bearing his autograph not existed, it might with some confidence be argued that a translation of such a famous author, published about 1603, by a near relative of Ben Jonson's, with whom

whom Shakespere was probably personally familiar, would be precisely the sort of book of which the Poet would possess himself, and in which we should expect to find his autograph. Let a catalogue of all the books published in or about that date be placed before any one familiar with Shakespere's cast of mind, and it may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that were he about to make a purchase out of the lot, one of the first he would select would be Montaigne.

Here, at the threshold, our curiosity to learn something of the favourite books which the Poet may have had about him is cut short. We know nothing of the sources of his learning beyond such internal evidence as his plays and poems afford. If they carry us over the threshold, they take us no further. They favour us with no glimpse of the sanctum—
tum—

tum—of the reading-stand, the work-table, the inkhorn, or the book-press. What early advantages Shakespere possessed—whether from the school “i’ the “church,” or other sources—continue a profound mystery up to this time; though there yet remain quarters for inquiry where some information might be gathered. The earliest reliable evidence of Shakespere’s being in London dates in 1589, when he was twenty-five years of age. It is possible he may have been connected with London for a year or two previously, but certainly not longer. Until he was twenty-three or four he resided at Stratford; and this fact supports the opinion that it was in Stratford the whole groundwork of his knowledge was obtained, as it was in Stratford, in later life, that the greatest achievements of his genius were accomplished. Imagination alone can aid us to picture him at

New

New Place when he was comparatively wealthy, able to purchase property and tythes in Old Stratford, Welcombe, and Bishopton, and to carry on profitable transactions in corn or wool. In his home he had but one child, Judith, who remained unmarried until the year previous to his death ! Poor Hamnet, her twin-brother, died the year before they moved into New Place ! Mrs. Shakespere and this daughter were his constant companions. His other daughter and her husband, Dr. Hall, lived hard by, and had made a grandfather of him when he was only forty-four years of age. A grandfather ! when many Englishmen, as Johnson expressed it, "having frisked " with the dogs," are only beginning to think about marriage, now-a-days !

The glimpses we catch of him as he passed along the last stage of his life are very few, and scarcely take us into his home.



THE ANCIENT CHALICE AND PATEN OF BISHOPTON,
*From which SHAKESPERE is said to have received the Holy
Communion.*

(It will be observed that the lid of the Chalice, when
inverted, forms the Paten, upon the top of which
is engraved the date, 1571).

home. Business transactions connected with his purchases at Stratford or in London; the possession of corn; a visit to London in 1614 to oppose the enclosure of lands at Stratford,—these and a few other facts of a like character are all the information regarding him that has reached us. There is infinitely more satisfaction in musing over a couple of lines in Rowe's Life, because their statement depends upon Betterton's inquiries, made at Stratford a few years after Shakespere's death. He spent his later days "in ease, retirement, and the conversation of his friends."

The words may be applied to the last years both of Shakespere and of Milton. In retirement and (poor though Milton was) at ease, and enjoying the conversation of their friends, their countrymen must love to contemplate England's most illustrious sons—the Epic and Dramatic Laureates of the Saxon tongue. Of the domestic

domestic scene at Bunhill Fields we know enough to be enabled to picture it. We even know that Milton enjoyed his evening pipe while joining in the fireside talk. We know his daily habits ; his hours of study ; his writings in London and at Chalfont. It is possible that Milton, in that year 1614, when Shakespere was in town, may have seen him pass down Bread Street, Cheapside, to the “Mermaid Tavern,” — that patriarch of London Clubs—there to enjoy a stoup of liquor and a jest with rare Ben Jonson. And yet, while a mass of the most interesting information exists regarding the life of the younger of these poets, who were actually contemporaneous, nothing survives to admit us into the home and society of him who Milton calls “our wonder and astonishment”—

“ Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,”

There are two circumstances connected
with

with his last days at New Place with which we are acquainted. "In perfect health and memory, God be praised," he had his Will drafted 25th January, 1616. February 10th, his daughter Judith married Thomas Quiney. We are led to conclude that the Will was probably drawn up in January with reference to his daughter's marriage; and that subsequent to the wedding, Shakespere was seized with some sudden illness, which led to the execution of the Will on the 25th day of March. These few facts, occurring in the first three months of the year 1616, constitute the entire knowledge we possess of the closing days of Shakespere's life. Forty years after his death, the then vicar of Stratford, Mr. Ward, jotted down some of the stories current in the place regarding the Poet. Among others, he stated, "Shakespear, Drayton, and Ben Jhonson
" had

“ had a merry meeting, and, itt seems,
“ drank too hard, for Skakespear died of
“ a feavour there contracted.”

When we remember that Shakespere died in the prime of life, and that he was in perfect health and memory twelve weeks prior to his decease, it seems likely enough that fever was the cause of death. The wedding of Judith would perfectly account for Ben Jonson and Drayton being his companions at Stratford at such a time, though no evidence has as yet been produced to prove Jonson's whereabouts at that date. The story of drinking too hard is susceptible of explanation in the same way; and it is easy to be understood how the conviviality of a wedding party at New Place would be converted, on the tongues of gossips, into “hard drinking at a merry meeting.” Village stories and traditions, as it has been already admitted, are worthy of consideration

sideration, but not of trust. They are seldom absolutely true in themselves, and yet they almost always direct the historic inquirer in the right direction to arrive at truth. Traditions are like photographs—distorting the prominent features of the subjects they represent. Accepting the reverend vicar's story as a Stratford tradition, told him in the rough-and-ready phraseology of the place, and translating the meaning of "hard drinking" into the joyous festivity which would be naturally observed at such a period as the wedding of the Poet's daughter, when friends like Ben Jonson and Drayton were gathered around the board of their old companion, to drink to the health and happiness of the bride and bridegroom,—we have a domestic picture presented to us of the last days of Shakespere, as happy in itself as it is probable from its consonance with his character.

Though

Though the picture is the barest sketch, yet its touches are true to nature ; and all, save one, we know to be true in fact. That one, (the coarseness of its colouring toned down), harmonises well with the rest, and gives completeness to the outlines. Let fancy fill in the canvas, and the autumn days of the Poet's life be painted in the golden tints of nature's own autumn time, in which funniness and sadness so mysteriously blend. Pleasant it is to think that the happiness of New Place was not shadowed by any tedious or agonising sickness. There was no lingering disease, no protracted pain. "In perfect health " and memory, God be praised," our Shakespere lived until his fifty-second year. He enjoyed his Merry Christmas, and the conversation of his friends. Then came the preparations for the wedding. New Place was all alive. Mrs. Shakespere's second-best bed, like enough, was
aired

aired and made up for the arrival from town of Ben Jonson. Shakespere thought the time befitted that he should make his Will, which was accordingly drafted. The great garden was neatly trimmed, no doubt, and the borders of snowdrops and crocuses fringed the beds about the mulberry tree. The wedding-day arrived. Parson Rogers, the vicar, appeared in his best cassock, bands, and tippet; and robed in clean white linen surplice, leaned against the tomb of John à Combe, book in hand, until the wedding party came. Coaches in Stratford were unknown; but

“ Slowly—stately—two by two,”

the train of relatives and friends proceeded from New Place to the church. The merry marriage-bells rang out their welcome, and William Shakespere, leading Judith through troops of friends,
presented

presented her at the altar to the vicar, and gave the woman to the man.

There were no signatures of witnesses to the ceremony necessary, else had we seen, perchance, Shakespere's and Rare Ben's upon the same page of the Register.

The ceremony over, and the vicar unrobed, the whole party left the church. It was the last time Shakespere entered it alive, and the last time he left it! The wedding of his child brought him there that day: about nine weeks afterwards his children attended in the same place at his funeral! But on that marriage morn none dreamt of, or anticipated, the impending loss which not New Place only, or Stratford, but England and her literature, were to suffer. The marriage tables were spread; the cakes and ale were plentiful; and Parson Rogers, garnishing his periods with Latinity, after the fashion of his day, told how one of old time, in a
little

little town of Galilee, had blessed with His presence that marriage-feast at which the "water saw its Lord, and blushed!"

*"Meanwhile the day sinks fast, the sun is set,
And in the lighted hall the guests are met;
The beautiful looked lovelier in the light
Of love, and admiration, and delight."*

It was a merry, happy evening in Stratford! No doubt the Haleses, and the Quineys, the Hathaways, "my Cousin "Green," Thomas Combe, and all the lads and lasses of the varied Shakespere connection, as far as Warwick, had collected at New Place to celebrate the wedding,—to "dance and eat plums;" to be merry with the "round" and "wooing dance," and to trip it lightly to the stirring notes of "John, come kiss me now!" Substituting Ben Jonson for "Cousin Capulet," the Poet's own words best serve our purpose to imagine the scene:—

"Welcome,

and Hampton ; and, perhaps, among the jovial pledges of the supper, Ben Jonson might let slip something about Gunpowder Plot. Such a “merry-meeting”—the celebration of his daughter’s wedding-day—we have sufficient reason for supposing, presents us to Shakespere at New Place, in health and vigour, for the last time. A fever seized him. A few brief days of sickness intervened. Gradually the strength of the hale man succumbed before the invading enemy. Necessity compelled the Will to be signed. Gloom possessed the lately happy, festive, house. At Chapel Street corner, with whispered words and solemn head-shaking, the friends of the dying man told their worst fears. Then there was another gathering! In Holy Cross, most like, the Church’s prayers were heard for him who lay a-dying. By his bedside Vicar Rogers would stand, calming the

woes

woes of the living, and pointing to the hopes of the dying ; while gradually—but painlessly as fever does its work—the last enemy stole in among the group, and the windows of New Place were darkened, and the doors were shut, and the keepers of the house trembled, and the mourners went about the street, because man goeth to his long home ! “ The rest is silence ! ”



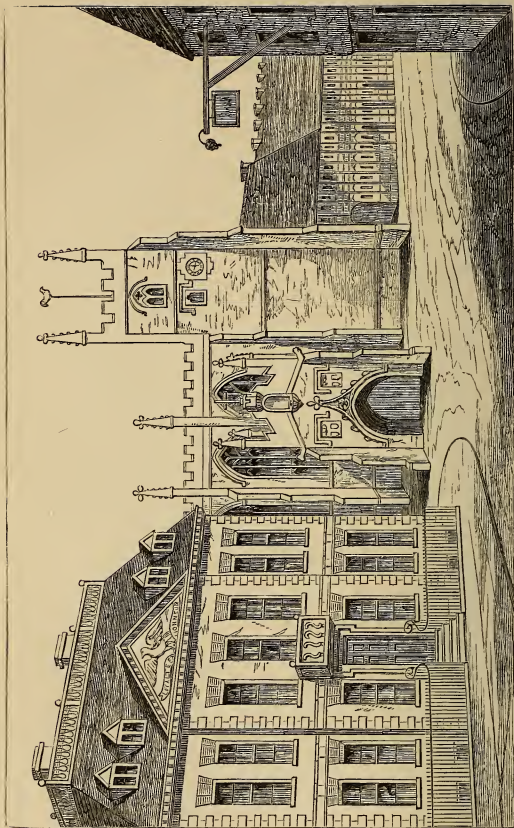


As regards the identification of Shakspeare's residence, there is a popular error. Many writers, and even some of the latest, assert that the Sir Hugh Clopton who succeeded to New Place in 1719, "repaired and beautified it, and built a "modern front to it."

This statement is repeated in numerous works down to the present day. It is not a mere error; it is more than an error, for it is totally untrue. The evil resulting from it is, that describers of New Place, whose works are especially read by visitors to Stratford, have betrayed the public into a very undeserved amount of regret for the destruction of the Rev. Francis Gastrell's house, in 1759; that being the house to
which

which a "modern front" is represented to have been added; the original structure of Sir Hugh Clopton being encased within it, just as the monastic Zion House is enclosed within that ponderous ducal pile on the banks of the Thames, which looks like a "Union" outside, and is decorated as an Italian Villa inside. Thousands of persons have mourned Mr. Gaftrell's destructiveness, caring nothing for the "modern front," but grieving over the antique interior, where Shakspeare was supposed to have lived and died.

It is desirable that the public should be set right concerning this mistake, and understand, that, about the year 1720, one Sir Hugh Clopton utterly demolished the fabric which another Sir Hugh Clopton, about the year 1490, had erected. It was not a "modern front," but an entirely new house, which was erected about 1720; and it was this structure (of the Dutch



NEW PLACE: as it appeared when rebuilt, circa 1720.

This is the house in which Garrick was entertained, and which was destroyed by Gasfrell.

(AN EXACT COPY FROM THE ORIGINAL DRAWING.)

Dutch William or Queen Anne's style of building) which, devoid of all historical association, the ruthless Gastrell razed to the ground.*

Representations of this house are extant. They only need to be examined, and the eye learns instantly that a complete rebuilding, and not a "modern fronting," must have occurred in or about 1720.

Upon the ground-floor the hall door occupied the centre, flanked right and left with three windows.

On the first-floor a row of seven windows were displayed, the central one opening into a small balcony. The three centre windows and the doorway, slightly projecting, were surmounted by a pediment, containing the crest and motto of the Cloptons, "*Loyaute Mon. Honneur*," in the tympanum.

The

* Appendix K.

The middle of the roof was occupied with a square platform, furrounded by a wooden balustrade, as frequently seen in houses of the period. Rusticated stonework, in long and short blocks, ornamented the corners of the house, and a projecting Classic cornice, with dentile decoration, gave a finish to the roof. On the opposite page this house is represented. In it Mr. Garrick and his friends were entertained at the time of the Jubilee, in 1769.

It was what auctioneers call a substantial family mansion, very square, very flat, very red, and in its flat-topped roof, with wooden balustrades, closely related to the style of structures delighted in by the King of pious and immortal memory.

About Kensington, Chiswick, and Hammer-smith, any number of "suitable residences," built at the same date, may be seen, generally conspicuous as Collegiate

giate schools, or Classical and Commercial academies.

However ponderous, raw, and self-asserting the architecture of that period may be, let it be confessed that it is infinitely grander, more stately, and more *real* than that pretentious style now prevalent in London, in which "whatever is, "is not," and a muddy stucco is salved over the carcases of houses to make them look what they are not—substantial.

The name of the Rev. Francis Gastrell was execrated in Stratford. He committed great offences against the town. This person appears to have been the son of Dr. Gastrell, Bishop of Chester, and to have held the living of Frodsham, in the diocese of Chester.

He married Jane, the daughter of Sir Thomas Aston, Bart., whose family was seated at Aston, in Cheshire. At Stow House, Stow, a suburb of Lichfield, about
half

half a mile to the east of the Cathedral, lived Elizabeth Aston, sister to Mrs. Gastrell, and, as is usual with spinsters when arrived at a mature age, commonly designated "Mrs. Aston."

Subsequently to the Rev. F. Gastrell's death, his widow lived on Stow Hill, in a house adjoining her sister's.

Letters addressed by Dr. Johnson to this lady are given in Boswell's Life, as also several to Mrs. Aston. With both these ladies Johnson had been intimately acquainted from his earliest years; and the intimacy continued until the day of his death. The following paragraphs from one of his letters will give the reader sufficient evidence of the terms on which Johnson lived with these friends:—

"BOLT COURT, FLEET STREET,

"*January 2, 1779.*

"DEAR MADAM,

"Now the New Year is come, of which I wish you
"and dear Mrs. Gastrell many and many returns, it is
"fit that I give you some account of the past year.

"In

“ In the beginning of it I had a difficulty of breathing,
“ and other illness, from which, however, I by degrees
“ recovered, and from which I am now tolerably free. . .
“ But the other day Mr. Prujean called and left word
“ that you, dear madam, are grown better ; and I know
“ not when I heard anything that pleased me so much.
“ I shall now long more and more to see Lichfield, and
“ partake the happiness of your recovery. Now you
“ begin to mend, you have great encouragement to take
“ care of yourself.

“ Do not omit anything that can conduce to your
“ health, and when I come I shall hope to enjoy with
“ you and dearest Mrs. Gastrell many pleasing hours.

“ Do not be angry at my long omission to write,” &c.
&c. &c.

“ Madam,

“ Your most humble servant,

“ SAM. JOHNSON.”

There is an old man, by name Mr. Thomas Barnes, now living in Bird Street, Lichfield, who has entered his ninety-first year. He was born at Chorley, near Lichfield, the first week in February, 1772. He was brought up a wig-maker, and may be said to have followed his trade up to the present time. Mr. Barnes is in the enjoyment of all his faculties, able to garden, and while gardening to recur with the greatest clearness of
memory

memory to the events of his early life. He is perhaps the only person living who can say that he remembers Dr. Johnson. Mr. Barnes informed the author that he clearly recollects Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Gastrell living at Stow; and that he remembers seeing the Doctor walking with these ladies in Boar Street, Lichfield, opposite the Town Hall. Mr. Barnes was also well acquainted with Mr. Peter Garrick, brother of the tragedian, whose house was situate in Lichfield, on the site now occupied by the newly-erected Literary Institution and Probate Office.

Mr. Barnes had no personal acquaintance with Doctor Johnson or his female friends, Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Gastrell, for whom, it is beyond question, the Doctor entertained the warmest and most sincere friendliness of feeling.

In glancing round the walls of Lichfield Cathedral, on the north side of the
great

great west door in the nave, and above the door of the southern transept, there still stand tablets to the memory of Mrs. Aston and Mrs. Gastrell. "Still," because it would be well, for the sake of the architecture, if those unsightly and unharmonious lumps of masonry had been removed, in the late elaborate restorations at Lichfield, to some less conspicuous positions. Lichfield Cathedral, as it now appears, will be contemplated for generations to come as a monument whereby to recall the Episcopate of Dr. Lonsdale. The lover of church architecture will ponder over and revel in the regenerated loveliness of that exquisite gem of art; and in admiration of the spirit and munificence with which the clergy and gentry of the diocese have gathered round their venerated Diocesan, in carrying out the glorious work which has been accomplished, contrast it painfully with some of
its

its sister edifices, where Cathedral bodies are much richer, and far more able, but apparently much less willing, to encounter the sacrifices necessary for much-needed restorations. To wit—look at Durham, a Golden See! That monarch of all Norman piles is still disfigured with filthy white-wash and yellow-wash. The condition of its nave is a disgrace to any Cathedral chapter; and, as if to prove that ecclesiastical barbarians still survive, those stupendous pillars—the glory of the Palatinate—have very lately been outraged by having glistening lead gas-pipes nailed to their sides, surmounted with fittings and shades of the commonest and most vulgar description!

As it will be necessary to say a few words respecting Mrs. Gastrell with regard to the destruction of the mulberry-tree, it may be the most chivalric if we anticipate her blame by founding her praise,

praise, and administer the antidote before the bane. The following inscription on her monument in Lichfield Cathedral is a grandiose specimen of testamentary gratitude :—

“ J. G. died October 30, 1791, aged 81.

“ Sacred to the memory of Jane, daughter of Sir Thomas Aston, of Aston, Baronet, and widow of the Rev. Francis Gastrell, Clerk, who, to the last moments of her life, was constantly employed in acts of secret and extensive charity, and on her death bequeathed to numerous benevolent institutions a considerable portion of her property. This monument was erected by her five nephews and three nieces, who partook equally and amply of her bounty.

“ *Let not thy alms, the holy JESUS cried,
Be seen of men, or dealt with conscious pride ;
So shall the LORD, whose eye pervades the breast,
For thee unfold the mansions of the blest.*

“ *O'er her whose life this precept held in view,
A friend to want, when each false friend withdrew ;
May these chaste lines, to genuine worth assign'd,
Pour the full tribute of a grateful mind.*

“ *Sweet as at noontide's sultry beam, the shower,
That steals refreshing o'er the wither'd flower,
Her silent aid, by soothing pity giv'n,
Sank through the heart, the dew of gracious heaven,*

“ *Deeds such as these, pure shade, shall ever bloom,
Shall live through time and glow beyond the tomb.
Through thee, the orphan owes parental care,
Bends the glad knee, and breathes the frequent prayer ;
Through*

*Through thee the debtor, from despondence fled,
 Clasps his fond babes, and hails his native shed ;
 Through thee, the slave, unbound his massive chain,
 Shouts with new joy, and lives a man again ;
 Through thee, the savage on a distant shore
 His SAVIOUR hears, and droops with doubt no more.*

*“ O thou who lingering here, shalt heave the sigh,
 The warm tear trembling on thy pensive eye,
 Go, and the couch of hopeless sorrow tend,
 The poor man’s guardian, and the widow’s friend ;
 Go, and the path which ASTON lately trod,
 Shall guide thy footsteps to the throne of GOD.”*

The Rev. Francis Gastrell appears to have had a great desire to acquire property in, and also about, Stratford. It does not seem that he intended to make New Place a permanent residence, but merely a temporary retreat for pleasure and repose. In his garden stood “Shakespeare’s “Mulberry-tree,” which all visitors to Stratford were curious to see and sit under. Mr. Gastrell’s temper was sorely tried by the perpetual invasions of these visitors, and in his spleen he sent forth the fiat to cut it down—“with Gothic barbarity,” as Boswell remarks. Dr. Johnson

son told him Mr. Gaftrell did fo “to vex
“his neighbours.” Boswell adds, “His
“lady, I have reason to believe, *on the*
“*same authority*, participated in the guilt
“of what the enthusiasts of our immortal
“bard deem almost a species of sacrilege.”
This sacrilege took place in 1756, only
three years after Gaftrell became possessor
of New Place.

The wood of the mulberry-tree was
purchased by Thomas Sharp, of Stratford,
watch and clock maker, who manufac-
tured it into boxes, goblets, and a variety
of articles for sale. Twelve rings made
out of the wood were manufactured for
the Jubilee, 1769. A few valuable
mementoes still remain, highly prized, and
carefully treasured.

Among these, the Shakespere chair now
in the possession of Miss Burdett Coutts,
and purchased by her for £300, is the
most valuable. The medallion on the
back

back of this chair was carved by William Hogarth.

There is the mulberry cup, which was used by Mr. Garrick, and held in his hand when he sang his own song at Stratford:

*"Behold this fair goblet, 'twas carved from the tree,
Which, O my sweet Shakespere, was planted by thee!
As a relic I kiss it, and bow at the shrine,
What comes from thy hand must be ever divine:
All shall yield to the mulberry-tree.
Bend to thee,
'Blest mulberry:
Matchless was he,
Who planted thee,
And thou, like him, immortal be!"*
Etc. etc.*

W. O. Hunt, Esq., Town-clerk of Stratford, possesses a drawing-room table made

* The following receipt for the sale of mulberry-tree wood to Garrick is interesting:—

"9th July, 1762.

"Received of David Garrick, Esq., by the hands
"of Lieutenant Eusebius Silvester, Two Guineas in
"full for four pieces of Mull-berry tree, which, with
"the other pieces of the same tree, I lately delivered
"to the said Mr. Silvester for the use of the said Mr.
"Garrick, I do hereby warrant to be part of the
"Mulberry

made of walnut, the top of which is beautifully inlaid with wood from the mulberry-tree. The device is unusual, being formed by a series of thin rounds, into which a branch of the tree must have been fawn. A block of wood occupies the centre of the table, the rounds encircle it, and successive circles continue being described, until they reach the exterior frame of walnut within which they are comprehended. The heart of the tree, and the varying rings of the wood, being seen in every round, a piece of furniture has been manufactured which is artistic as a specimen of geometrical

“Mulberry Tree commonly called Shakespeare’s tree :
“and said to be planted by him ; and lately cut down
“in the Rev. Mr. Gastrell’s, late Sir Hugh Clopton’s,
“garden, in Stratford-upon-Avon.

“*Witness my hand*—GEO. WILLES.

“*Witness hereto*—

WM. HUNT, *Attorney in Stratford.*

JOHN PAYTON, *Master of the White Lion there.*”

trical cabinet-making, and invaluable in its historical affociations. This table belongs to a gentleman who best deserves to possess it, both on account of the unflagging enthusiasm he has exhibited in everything that has reference to Shakespere (especially of late in securing New Place to the public); and also on account of the urbanity he has shown visitors to Stratford, who have had the honour of being introduced to him.

In 1759 what was thought a greater, but was in reality a minor offence, was committed. Being compelled to pay the assessment for the poor at Stratford, as well as at Lichfield, his fixed residence, Gaftrell vowed that New Place should never be assessed again, and pulled it down.

This has been regarded as an unpardonable crime. It was not so in reality, because the house had no connection with the Poet, as has been shown. There can
be

be little doubt that had Homer, Dante, Tasso, and Shakespere all lived in that felfsame houle it would have mattered nothing to the Rev. Mr. Gastrell. He would have destroyed it, whatever had been its affociations.

Even among clergymen, particularly the perverse and obstinate, passion often dominates veneration.

The Rev. Francis Gastrell's disposition is a study; but it is one which cannot be now pursued. It may be allowable, however, to hint, that inquiry may justify Johnson's communication to Boswell. Mrs. Gastrell possibly did more than "participate in the guilt;" and in the murder done upon the mulberry-tree it may hereafter appear that she was the Lady Macbeth, instigating the reverend Thane to deeds of "Gothic barbarity."

A Diary written in Scotland by Mr. Gastrell has lately been presented (among other

other gifts) to the embryo, "Stratford
"Museum." Hereafter the public will
have access to this hitherto private MS.
It tells nothing of Stratford; but being a
diary, it reveals something of the style of
thought of the man. A very common-
place and unpoetic style of thought it is,
but harmonious with what we should
conceive such a man would be. It may
not be gallant to the fair sex, but never-
theless something near the truth, to con-
jecture that Mr. Gastrell has been abused
over much: that, as in all great crimes, so
in the mulberry-tree slaughter, "there was
"a woman in it," aiding, abetting, and,
as Johnson says, "participating in the
"guilt." Malone, in writing to Dr.
Davenport, of Stratford, May, 1788,
quotes a letter received from a lady at
Lichfield, who asserts that it was Mrs.
Gastrell, and not her husband, who cut
down the mulberry-tree. In the same
letter

letter, Malone's correspondent gives him a history of Mrs. Gastrell's latest performance at Lichfield. Her house on Stow Hill had been let to a lady at the rental of £100. The lady had been very kind to the poor in the neighbourhood. Mrs. Gastrell having had some disagreement with her tenant, took measures to turn her out, and *determined that the poor should derive no benefit from that house again*, which she resolved should remain empty. Malone's correspondent, in great wrath, says, that Mrs. Gastrell is "little better than a fiend."

In this report there is a coincidence that cannot escape observation. The same feeling which prompted the destruction of the house at Stratford, in order that it might never again be assessed for the relief of the poor, likewise prompted the closing of the house at Stow Hill, Lichfield, that the poor might derive no further

further assistance from thence. It is hardly possible to resist the conclusion which the peculiarity of these circumstances suggests; and despite Johnson's friendly regard for Mrs. Gastrell, we must remember that it is from his own lips we hear of that lady's participation in her husband's acts. She was undoubtedly a passionate and imperious woman; and if the whole truth were known, it seems very probable that the instigation to the act, if not the carrying it into execution, both in felling the tree and destroying the house, is attributable rather to Mrs., than to Mr., Gastrell.

It has been discovered that there was a Chancery Suit pending between Mr. Gastrell and the Corporation, strengthening a suspicion that hot blood was roused. The public at this moment knows little of the merits of the Gastrell case, or the amount of provocation under which
which

which that irascible divine suffered. If all the charges against him regarding the destruction of the mulberry tree were proved, and he were found guilty as the real criminal, nevertheless he cannot be found guilty, as he commonly has been, of destroying Shakespere's house,—simply because Shakespere's house did not exist for him to destroy.

From these facts above ground, we now descend to discoveries recently made below ground.

During the spring of 1862, that portion of the garden of New Place fronting the main street, Chapel Street, on the west, and bounded by Chapel Lane on the south, was excavated to the extent of about sixty feet square. The workmen, having cleared away the foil

foil and *débris* over this large space to the depth of eight or ten feet, came upon a series of foundations. Some very interesting facts have been discovered. The leading and most manifest are, that two sets of foundations exist. The one must be those of the mansion built in the Georgian era, *circa* 1720; the other those of Shakespeare's own house—the "Great House" which Sir Hugh built *circa* 1490, and in which both he and the Poet "lived and died." Upon this site there never have been more than the two houses in question. For the sake of distinction, let these houses be designated respectively, the "Great House" and the "Clopton House."

It is easy to distinguish the foundations of the one from the other, because the lines of walls in the Clopton House at certain points meet, and intersect the walls of the Great House (especially in the foundations

foundations abutting on Chapel Lane). Where they so meet and intersect, the Clopton foundations are *built over and across* those of the Great House.

Again: the materials of the Great House are for the most part stone, which such foundations—built nearly 400 years ago—commonly were. The materials of the Clopton House are red brick, and in many places the plaster upon the walls of the offices in the basement is still perfect; and not only perfect, but shows the coloured outline of the staircase, leading from the offices up to the first-floor, as clean and black as if it had been painted yesterday.

Various evidences prove the date of this portion of the foundations.

First. The bricks of which the party-walls are built have that bright red colour, and are set together with that peculiar closeness and sharpness of edge, which

which particularly characterise the period of William, Anne, and George I.

Secondly. The condition of the plaster and painting shows that they belong to a house which must have been inhabited at a comparatively recent period.

Thirdly. The evidences of habitation revealed in the Clopton foundations prove that they were portions of Gastrell's house, and verify the story of its sudden destruction. The kitchen fire-place was found quite perfect, and the ash-pit filled with the cinders of the coals that may have cooked Mr. Gastrell's dinner in Stratford the day before he demolished the house. A great variety of trifling domestic evidences of this sort abound, showing that these "Clopton" foundations are the basement story of a house of modern use, and that the house itself must have been erected during the last century.

Last of all, the ground above these foundations when dug out proved to be a *débris* of plaster-of-Paris mouldings, cornices, and decorations belonging to the style of ornament commonly introduced in the houses of the reigns of Anne and the first Georges. When the walls of the house were knocked down, this plaster work was buried in the ruins; but it is now carefully arranged in an adjoining house for inspection.

There cannot be a doubt about the foundations of the Clopton House (1720) being identified.

From them we turn to the much smaller but far more interesting remains of the Great House.

It is evident that the Great House was not restored with a "modern front," because there are two distinct ground plans; and the Clopton House foundations (as already stated) run askew to those
of

of the Great House, intersecting them at very acute angles. It is also evident that in laying the walls of the Clopton House a great portion of the foundations of the Great House were cleared away entirely, and that those only were left untouched which there was no necessity to move. Consequently the foundations of the Great House in which Shakespeare lived are comparatively small in extent.

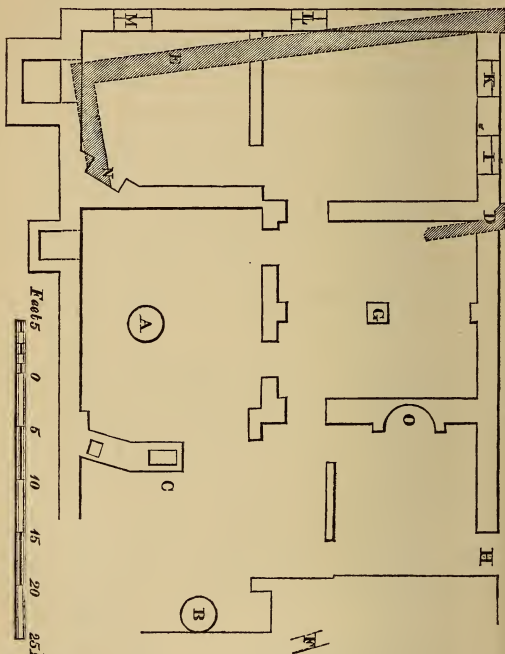
The following facts are illustrative:—

First. In two separate places Tudor mullions have been discovered, built into the Clopton foundations, showing that some of the material of the Great House was cleared out and used again in laying the external foundations of the modern one.

Secondly. In that portion of the Clopton foundations where the kitchens and offices stood, the ground exhibits no
traces

CHAPEL LANE

CHAPEL STREET



NASH'S HOUSE

KEY TO THE PLAN

OF THE

FOUNDATIONS: GREAT HOUSE AND CLOPTON HOUSE.

—o—

- A. Ancient Well of the Great House.
- B. Well, lately discovered, which appears to have belonged to Nath's House.
- C. Kitchen Fire-place.
- D. Piece of projecting Ancient Wall, belonging to Shakespere's, *i.e.* the Great House; conjectured to be the Foundation of the Entrance Porchway.
- E. The External Wall of the Ancient Great House, terminating in N, a Fire-place of the Clopton House.
- F. The Site of Nath's House: with Ancient Foundations.
- G. The Crown of the Vaulting deposited in one of the Offices.
- H. The Position at which the Ancient Mullions have been built into the Clopton Foundations.
- I, K, L, M. Cellar Windows in the Clopton Foundations.
- N. Fire-place in one of the Offices of ditto.
- O. Ditto.

traces of ancient walls, although it is almost certain that the Great House entirely covered this site, since the frontage to Chapel Street, between Chapel Lane on the north, and Nash's House (the next plot of land on the south, where a residence now stands, but which never belonged to New Place), is not more than sixty feet in length.

Two apparent exceptions present themselves, viz., a piece of ancient wall which, extending under the street, protrudes inwards into the main wall of the Clopton foundations; and a few feet removed from it, in one of the offices, there are the remains of the crown of a vaulting. Both these interlopers, looking strangely out of place, are at first sight a complete puzzle. Why they were suffered to abide where they now assert themselves, and are undoubtedly in the way, is the natural conjecture.

The

The portion of wall that projects from the foundations (and outward, under the footpath of Chapel Street) is palpably, both from position and construction, part of the Great House, and may probably be one of the foundations of the porchway or entrance of the Great House, which would necessarily require to be very strong, if above the porch (with its ponderous oak beams, and its elaborately carved arcades) there rose an overhanging chamber, with oriel window commanding the street. This is mere conjecture, which, though it seems probably correct, must be taken for what it appears worth.

The crown of the vaulting obtrusively thrusting itself into one of the Clopton offices would be a marvel and a mystery, supposing it to belong to the Great House; but, with all humility, it may be questioned whether it ever did! May it not, after all, be one (and the only one)

one) mass of vaulting, which did not break asunder when that reverend Samson pulled down a domestic Gaza about the ears of his enemies—the Philistines of Stratford? May not this conglomerate have quietly dropped from its vaulted eminence to the humble position on the floor which it now occupies, and (instantly covered in with lighter materials) have escaped being dashed asunder? This supposition, if it be correct, would solve a difficulty of which there has, as yet, been no satisfactory solution offered.

Assuming it to be true, the remains of Shakespere's House would be the above-mentioned (porch) wall, and the main walls of the Great House adjoining Chapel Lane, which the Clopton walls were built across, and intersected, but which remain in their original solid condition. These main walls are preserved the entire depth of the house, commencing

cing from the frontage at the junction of Chapel Street and Chapel Lane, and running eastward along Chapel Lane. Having reached the extreme point to which foundations run in that direction (about forty-five feet in depth), they turn at a right angle northward, and continue about twenty feet, when they encounter a fire-place of the Clopton House, built over and upon them, in which they become lost, and are no farther traceable.

These, then, are the very walls of the very house in which William Shakespere lived and died. They are inconsiderable, it is true, but nevertheless far more extensive than any one could have dared to hope; for when we consider that two houses have occupied this site, and (as is evident) the foundations of the former were in a great measure cleared away in order to lay the foundations of the latter,—moreover, when we recall the
passionate

passionate vexation which caused the sudden and total demolition of the latter, it is a matter of no small satisfaction to discover *at least sixty feet* of the indisputable and veritable foundations of the Great House that Sir Hugh Clopton erected nearly four hundred years ago, surviving the ravages of time and the work of man's destructiveness, exhumed and once more brought to light in the middle of the nineteenth century; so that all who reverence the name and memory of the greatest genius of the world, may identify, and, for themselves, examine the walls of the house in which our Shakespere lived and died.

In the midst of these foundations there has been simultaneously revealed an object of peculiar interest. It is "Shakespere's Well"—the ancient well of New Place. When the labourers made the discovery in digging out the foundations, it was
choked

choked with the *débris* of the Gastrell ruins. The well was cleared out, and its quoining stones were found to be as perfect as ever. On the 5th of August, 1862, another well, equally as ancient, and, if possible, in a better state of preservation as to its masonry, was discovered in the embankment under Nash's House, at the extreme northern limit of the New Place plot. Two wells attached to the same house seem useless; and therefore it may be conjectured, that although this latter well is now within the boundaries of New Place, it may, at some distant period, have belonged to, and been enclosed in, the adjoining freehold, "Nash's House," which is now included in the New Place estate. On the morning after the clearance, Shakespere's well had filled with several feet of the purest and most delicious spring water. From the bountiful supply of this spring, every traveller can
now

now flake his thirst, and drink of the same well from which the Poet drank.

In the course of the excavations a few articles have been dug up, of no particular interest or value.

At the bottom of the well, a peculiarly primitive flat-candlestick, with long, straight handle, and very small stand for the candle, was found.

A bone-handled knife, with metal ornaments of an antique character.

A number of tobacco-pipe bowls of the time of Charles II.; the bowls very small, and the clay impressed at the elbow with the name of the manufacturer, "Robt. Legg."

Figured tiles belonging to a pavement; glass; and various pieces of iron-work, much corroded.

These, and a vast amount of small articles of domestic use, have been found among the *debris*, which are all collected together

together at Nash's House for the antiquary's examination and discussion. Among them there may perchance be some trifling objects as ancient as the time of Shakespere; but it would be almost idle to hope that the riddling of the vast amount of earth which has been displaced will bring to light any objects of real value, or capable of being associated with the Poet's tenancy of New Place.





All the boundaries of Shakespere's Garden—including the "Great Garden"—have been ascertained, and proved by the title-deeds (nearly 100 in number) of the surrounding properties. The whole of this New Place estate is now purchased and secured to the public, with the exception of one plot occupied by a conventicle-like brick building, entitled "The Theatre." This structure has neither age, appearance, utility, nor association to recommend it to the public. The spot where it stands was never occupied by any former theatre; the building belongs to the present century. As a building it is to the last degree ugly, and might be mistaken for a village Bethel or Ebenezer!

Ebenezer ! It is an obstruction and eye-fore in Shakespere's Gardèn ; added to which, to complete its condemnation, it is not a theatre at all ! Having been converted into a sort of lecture-hall or public room, it suits the purposes either of a PoliceCourt or CountyCourt in the morning, and of Ethiopian Serenaders, Conjurers, and Travelling Wonders at night !

The building belongs to shareholders, who are willing to sell the property for £1,100. In due time it is to be hoped that this hideous fabric will be purchased and swept away, so that New Place may be restored to its former condition as a garden, and preserved as such for ever.

The name of a theatre in Shakespere's Garden, catches the ear, and suggests that it must be connected with the traditions of the place. It is apparent that this structure has no claim to the antiquary's consideration. There is but
one

one building in Stratford that is in any way associated with the past—and that is a barn. A barn is still pointed out in which Mrs. Siddons is said to have performed in her youth. The tradition is probably true, because not only was the company of her father, Roger Kemble, accustomed to perform in Warwickshire, but her grandfather, Mr. Ward, was in the habit of acting at Stratford. On the 9th September, 1746, this gentleman gave a benefit performance in the (then) Town Hall, in order to procure funds for repainting the bust of Shakespere on the monument in the church, and restoring the original colours. The play enacted was *Othello*, accompanied with a Prologue written for the occasion by the Rev. Joseph Greene. Through Ward, a distinguished man of the present generation was connected with a remote dramatic era : the late Charles Kemble, with

with whose person and performances thousands still among us were familiar, was Ward's grandson; and the grandfather was an actor in the days of Betterton. At one of his benefits in Dublin, the celebrated Peg Woffington made her first appearance, according to the statement in Boaden's "Life of Kemble," though his statement "errs in particularity;" for while it fixes the date as April 25th, 1760, the records of the quiet little church at Teddington tell us that on the 3rd of that month, in that same year, Peg Woffington had left life's stage for ever, and was interred on that day, aged 42. The mistake made by Boaden arose from his confusing the year of Woffington's death with the year of her first appearing for the benefit of Charles Kemble's grandfather. The hall in which Ward produced *Othello*, for the purpose of restoring the monument at
Stratford

Stratford, no longer exists ; so that the barn which is associated with the name of Mrs. Siddons, seems to be the sole remaining building in the town within which the plays of the Poet were represented in the days that are gone and the years that are fled.

At the commencement of this work it was contended that as great a veneration is felt for Shakespere by the present generation as by any that preceded it. It must, at the same time, be admitted that the age is eminently practical. With a revived and increasingly spreading taste for the Beautiful, the men of the Iron age demand that the Beautiful shall be combined with the Useful. Englishmen are ever ready to give their money in honour of a great name ; but they stipulate that it shall not be wasted on
useless

useless architecture or unprofitable objects. It has been the purpose of this work to show what use has been made of the money already provided by the public. New Place in its integrity has been secured. Shakespere's Garden is beyond any risks from future sales. The site of the Great House has been discovered. The few remains of foundations have been brought to light. The garden, as yet in a disturbed state, will presently be cleared and restored to its former use. Once again, and for ever, it will be Shakespere's Garden.

In this, a good work has been accomplished. Much is done; but much remains to do. To complete the work well begun, public aid will be necessary, and for that aid the public must be sought. It might be well if those who were concerned in the various purchases of New Place, and have examined all the titles and records connected with it, were to give
to

to the world a detailed history of them, accompanied by the fullest plans and illustrations of the property as it existed when put into trust in 1861. Hereafter such a work, which this small volume makes no presumptuous pretence of undertaking, would be of the highest value. There are very few men among us competent to perform it; but among the few, Mr. Halliwell has had rare advantages in his connection with the purchases of New Place, which no one else has enjoyed. To him the public seem to have a right to look for that fair and faithful history—that compilation of the facts regarding New Place, which have hitherto been obscure or unknown, but must now be best known to him.

The object with which these pages have been written, will be fully accomplished if they succeed in attracting public notice to the good work so far done, and in stimulating

lating the aid which is necessary to complete the full redemption of the Poet's property. New Place must for ever be associated with the memory of Shakespere; and the mere sight of foundation walls belonging to the house in which he lived and died, cannot fail to excite the deepest interest in the minds of all who are attracted to the spot by hearing of the recent discoveries. But interest having been excited, and curiosity having been gratified, a practical purpose will be required, sooner or later, to support the sentiment, under the influence of which, Shakespere's countrymen have purchased his garden. We are often assured that "opportunity is everything." If not everything, it is unquestionably a great thing; and with regard to the subject under consideration, opportunity has resolved to do her best in lending it a helping hand.

The

The swiftly approaching year 1864 will be the Tercentenary Jubilee of the Poet's Birth. Nearly a century ago (in 1769), the celebration of his nativity was held in Stratford under the direction of David Garrick. A fillier or more uselefs exhibition was never witnessed. Despite the excitement which it created at the moment in Stratford, there seem to have been some of the inhabitants who spoke of it in contemptuous language, for the "Garrick Correspondence" reveals a passage of letters between the Rev. Mr. Jago,* of Snitterfield, and George Garrick, the brother of the tragedian, showing that the latter had resented some uncomplimentary animadversions of Mr. Jago's upon Garrick and the Jubilee. The brother's resentment was a necessary result, for never was there a more devoted brother

* Appendix. L.

brother than was George Garrick to David. A charming illustration of this is afforded us in the "tender pleasantry" of Charles Bannister at the time of Garrick's demise. Whenever George was absent from Drury Lane for any length of time, on returning, his invariable question to the hall-porter was, "Has my brother wanted me?" It eventuated that the brothers died within a few days of one another. David Garrick expired at his house on the Terrace, Adelphi, early on Wednesday morning, January 20th, 1779, and was buried in Poet's Corner on the 1st of February. On the 3rd of February George Garrick expired. When the report reached Drury Lane, Bannister observed, "His brother wanted him!"

But the admiration and affection of George for David could not draw the sting of the Rev. Mr. Jago's cutting observations. Their sting lay in their truth

truth. Garrick in one of his letters wrote, "When I was busied about that foolish hobby-horse of mine, the Jubilee!" His language is as correct a description of it as could be given, though the wet weather kindly interfered to prevent the greatest absurdity of the programme—the "pageant procession of Shakespere's principal characters." Owing to the tremendous downpour of rain, that pageant was never perpetrated at the Jubilee, albeit, there is in the Town Hall of Stratford, a fire-screen which gives an amazing pictorial illustration of the procession; and there is also a tradition that Mrs. Siddons personated Venus in the Jubilee procession. The screen in question—although it represents a display that never took place,—is well worthy of contemplation. Painted by some village artist, it is as grotesque and amusing a production as any one with a keen sense of the

the

the ludicrous, would wish to contemplate. Distant be the day when the Corporation of Stratford remove from their Hall, this humorous representation of an historical event that never took place !

With reference to Mrs. Siddons appearing as Venus in the procession of the Jubilee, it is true that she did personate that part, but not at Stratford. Owing to the procession being washed out of the programme, it was dramatised the following October (1769), at Drury Lane, by Garrick, who introduced into it the songs and the odes that had been given in the Stratford Amphitheatre. We read of it, " Such was the magnificence of the " scenery, and the effect given through- " out the piece, that it was so far esta- " blished in public favour as to cause its " being repeated during the season for " upwards of 100 nights."

It was not even upon this occasion
that

that Mrs. Siddons exhibited as Venus, nor, until 1775,—the season before Garrick's final retirement, and that of her first appearance at Drury Lane. Garrick revived the *spectacle* of the Jubilee Procession during the season, and the Lady Ann who had trembled in terror before his glance of reproach in the great scene of Gloster's wooing, was cast to personify Venus. Mrs. Siddons, in her Autograph Recollections, alludes to the Jubilee performance:—"He (Garrick) would sometimes hand me from my own seat in the green-room to place me next to his own. He also selected me to personate Venus at the revival of the Jubilee. This gained me the malicious appellation of 'Garrick's Venus,' and the ladies who so kindly bestowed it on me, rushed before me in the last scene, so that if he (Mr. Garrick) had not brought us forward with him, with his own hands,

" my

“ my little Cupid, (the subsequent auto-
“ biographer Thomas Dibdin), and my-
“ self, whose appointed situations were in
“ the very front of the stage, might have
“ as well been in the Island of Paphos.
“ Mr. Garrick would also flatter me by
“ sending me into one of the boxes when
“ he acted any of his great characters.”

Such are the facts which connect the name of Mrs. Siddons with the Jubilee Procession, there being no connection at all with the celebration at Stratford, at which, nevertheless, she might have been present; for two years previously (February 12, 1767), Miss Kemble (aged twelve), and her brother, John Philip (aged ten),* had appeared in the parts of the Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of York,

* John Philip Kemble was born at Prescot, in Lancashire, February, 1757. The author was, some years since, curate of Prescot, and a frequent visitor of the humble folks who now inhabit the house in which Kemble first

York, in the theatre at Worcester, in Havard's tragedy of *Charles the First*, which, though unknown to the modern stage, was at one time highly popular, and so affecting, that when the part of Charles was performed at Hull by Cummings, the early rival of Kemble, his impersonation of the miseries of the King so overwhelmed Miss Terrot, the daughter of a garrison officer, that her emotions caused her instantaneous death.

The Stratford Jubilee was celebrated for three days: Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, the 6th, 7th, and 8th
of

first saw light. Like many houses in the neighbourhood, it is built of the prevailing red sandstone, and is whitewashed. It has solidity enough to last for centuries to come. In former years, when Prescott was the first town out of Liverpool on the coaching road, thousands of travellers would pass by the door of John Kemble's birthplace. It stands in the "Lower Road," going from the market-place of Prescott to the neighbouring railway station of Rainhill; and the good man of the house used to take pride in showing the bedroom "i' which th' great actor cum i'th' wuld, welly nigh gang a 'undred yeear."

of September, 1769. The town was thronged with visitors from London and the surrounding counties. There were present, among others—

The Duke of Manchester.
Duke of Dorset.

The Earl of Northampton,	}	And their Countesses.
Earl of Hertford,		
Earl of Plymouth,		
Earl of Carlisle,		
Earl of Denbigh,		
Earl of Shrewsbury,		
Lord Beauchamp,		
Lord Grosvenor,		
Lord Windsor,		
Lord Catherlough,		
Lord and Lady Spencer,		
Lord and Lady Archer,		
Lord and Lady Craven;		

and a large number of Baronets, Members of Parliament, and County gentlemen. Connected with the drama there were—

David Garrick, and his brother George,
Mr. Foote,
Mr. Colman,
Mr. Macklin,
Mr. and Mrs. Yates,
Mr. Ross (Edinbro),
Mr. Lee (Bath),

and about one hundred and seventy actors
and

and actresses of minor repute from the London theatres.

Among other notabilities present was James Boswell. Dr. Johnson was staying with the Thrales, at Brighton, and could not be induced to honour the Jubilee with his presence. Boswell says, "I was very sorry that I had not his company with me at the Jubilee in honour of Shakespeare, at Stratford-upon-Avon, the great Poet's native town. Johnson's connection both with Shakespeare and Garrick founded a double claim to his presence, and it would have been highly gratifying to Mr. Garrick. Upon this occasion I particularly lamented that he had not that warmth of friendship for his brilliant pupil which we may suppose would have had a benignant effect on both. When almost every man of eminence in the literary world

“ world was happy to partake in this
 “ festival of Genius, the absence of
 “ Johnson could not but be wondered at
 “ and regretted.”

Perhaps the verdict of posterity may be the reverse of Boswell's. The “Great Cham” was not partial to buffoonery, and it is probable that he kept away from Stratford because he would not encourage his “brilliant pupil” astride of his “foolish hobby horse.”* Johnson had
 no

* A number of letters regarding the Jubilee of 1769, addressed by Garrick to Mr. Hunt, of Stratford (grandfather of the present Town Clerk), are in existence. In one of them Garrick says:—“I heard yesterday, to my surprise, that the country people did not seem to relish our Jubilee, that they looked upon it to be Popish, and that we should raise ye d——l, and would not. I suppose this may be a joke, but after all my trouble, pains, labor, and expense for their service and the honour of yr county, I shall think it very hard if I am not to be received kindly by them; however, I shall not be the first martyr for my zeal.

“ I am, dear Sir,

“ Always in a hurry, but yours sincerely,

“ D. GARRICK.”

“ Pray tell me sincerely what common people say.”

no taste for masquerading, which Boswell had. The occasion was propitious. During the day he appeared in the streets of Stratford with the words "Corfica Boswell" displayed in large letters round his hat; and at the evening entertainment he exhibited himself as a Corfican Chief, with "*Viva la Libertà*" inscribed on the front of his cap! Johnson's presence at such fooling, would have been *much to be regretted*.

The only portions of the Jubilee which deserve record, were the performance, in Stratford Church, of Dr. Arne's Oratorio of *Judith*, under the direction of Arne himself, for which he received a payment of £60 from Garrick; and the Oration pronounced by Garrick, in the Amphitheatre. The Odes, which were partly spoken by him, and partly sung, contain nothing to recommend them to our perusal; but one passage from the
" Oration

“Oration in honour of Shakespere,
“written and spoken by Mr. Garrick,”
may fitly be reproduced. Alluding to
the “uses” and opportunities of life, at
the close of his oration, Garrick said,—

“In these fields, where we are pleased
“with the notion of doing him honour,
“he is mouldering into dust.

‘Deaf the prais’d ear, and mute the tuneful tongue.’

“How awful is the thought! Let me
“pause. If I speak, it must be in my
“own character and in yours. We are
“men; and we know that the hour
“approaches with silent but irresistible
“rapidity, when *we* also shall be dust.
“We are now in health and at ease; but
“the hour approaches when we shall be
“sensible only to sickness and to pain,—
“when we shall perceive the world gra-
“dually to fade from our sight, and close
“our eyes in perpetual darkness.”

Ten years subsequently the world had faded from Garrick's sight. Time's course is so rapid, that another centenary Jubilee is close at hand. What men of eminence in the literary world, what nobles or princes of the land, will collect at Stratford—and in what manner the Jubilee is to be conducted—must shortly be considered. It may, however, be suggested to those interested in the restoration of New Place, and to those who will arrange the programme of the Jubilee, that they should remember Garrick's solemn peroration on the "uses" of life, and, especially in this practical age, determine upon soliciting public sympathy and support in April, 1864, for practical purposes, and not for a frivolous pageant to the memory of a great man. The best honour which can be paid to his memory will be the promotion of objects useful to the body of men in connection with whom

whom Shakespere made his name and fame.

That the Tercentenary of his birth should be celebrated at his birthplace is a propriety which every one will recognise; but what *must* be there, may also be elsewhere. There is no reason why the people of the Metropolis should not commemorate the occasion, as well as the select few whose time and means will allow them to congregate at Stratford. Such a double celebration seems almost a certainty. But, whatever be the form of festival held, whether in London or in Stratford, the age we live in, warns all sensible men against the repetition of any such mumming as took place under Garrick's programme of 1769. Foote, who was present, has given us his definition of that occasion:—"A Jubilee is a public
" invitation, circulated by puffing, to go
" post without horses, to a borough
" without

“ without representatives, governed by
“ a mayor and aldermen who are no
“ magistrates, to celebrate a great poet,
“ whose own works have made him im-
“ mortal, by an ode without poetry,
“ music without melody, dinners with-
“ out victuals, and lodgings without
“ beds; a masquerade, where half the
“ people are bare-faced; a horse-race up
“ to the knees in water; fireworks extin-
“ guished as soon as they were lighted;
“ and a gingerbread amphitheatre, which,
“ like a house of cards, tumbled to pieces
“ as soon as it was finished.” Foote’s
caustic humour, if not true in its descrip-
tion of the Jubilee, is perfectly true in
outline; the grotesque colouring of the
picture is its only untruth.

It is devoutly to be wished, that the
follies of 1769, may be a warning to the
people of 1864. To begin and end with
a show, and to accomplish no permanent
good,

good, is not consonant with the taste of the present day. Whether at Stratford or in London, or at both places, the Tercenary celebrations must seek the public sympathy on behalf of some public good. If there were but the one celebration at Stratford, it might be well to devote all the funds collected, to the completion of the proposed purchases, the laying-out of New Place Gardens, and the erection of some monumental structure, commemorative of the purchase and of the 300th celebration of the Poet's Birth, but, while beautiful as a piece of architecture, at the same time a structure that should be practically useful for literary purposes, and a benefit to Stratford and the nation. In the Metropolis, the results of a Jubilee celebration, might probably be devoted to some other object. It appears natural, that the object should be Metropolitan; and if suggestions were wanted,

numberless

numberless schemes, without doubt, would quickly be proposed. But it should never be forgotten that the Jubilee is in honour of Shakespere, and that those have the best claim to enjoy the benefits of the public largesse, who, in this day and generation, follow the calling of the man, to whose honoured memory, the commemoration is dedicated.

True it is, there are many who profess a conscientious disapproval of the drama, and who, neither directly nor indirectly, would encourage the "poor player." It may be a subject of regret—but, nevertheless, it is a fact which cannot be denied—that some persons affect to condemn the works of Shakespere himself. With this undoubted fact in mind, it will be desirable, having due respect to tender consciences and hopeless prejudices, to present some object for public sympathy at the Jubilee, which may, if possible, disarm all cavil and objection.

If

If the depreciators of Shakespere, and the disapprovers of the profession to which he belonged, be taken on their own ground—and, for the sake of argument it be momentarily granted that the Puritanical view of the drama is its righteous and proper estimate; in the same proportion that its influence is asserted to be evil and destructive, must the sympathies and sollicitude of such persons, if sincere in their belief, be aroused on behalf of one helpless class connected with Shakespere's profession. Whatever the player may be, the player's child must be an object of concern to all who are interested in the education of the young;—but he must be doubly so to those, whose duty it is, in the sincerity of their principles, to attempt the rescue of that child, from influences which they believe destructive of its soul's welfare!

It

It is to be hoped that the subject of education would present a common ground, whereon diversities of opinions might meet to accomplish, a truly Christian and beneficial object.

In the abundant philanthropy of the present age, schools and institutions have sprung up on every side, wherein the greater the degradation of the young, the greater the sympathy of the professed religious world! The fallen, the friendless, the erring, and the outcast, have been the recipients of Christian compassion and solicitude. Every right-feeling person must pray that God's blessing may protect and prosper our Ragged Schools, our Reformatories, our Penitentiaries, and that they may, in their prosperity, reflect blessings on the heads of all earnest men and women, who, in their support, have practically evinced the first of Christian virtues. But there are
spheres

spheres in life, removed alike from absolute want, and association with crime ; where sympathy is not less needed, and where respectable poverty — that owes no man anything—shrinks from seeking aid, and values self-dependence with as honourable a love, as the wealthiest and noblest of the land !

Among Shakespere's professional descendants, there are many such, who, owing to the smallness of their salaries, are hindered from procuring for their progeny that sound teaching which every English child should enjoy ; and who, constrained by need, are compelled to introduce their offspring in their early years to subordinate situations in the theatres, at a time when the child's moral and physical constitution require, the one bringing up in the way it should go, the other, the vigour derived from regular habits, early rising, early rest, and unbroken repose.

repose. It is unnecessary to point out that the opposite of all this, is the inevitable result of engaging a child in the arduous business of a theatre. The intellect is left untrained, the strength of the body is sapped and undermined, and it is to be feared that in a calling peculiarly open to temptation, moral deterioration may frequently accompany physical exhaustion.

In that Royal College which has been honoured with the patronage of, and has been watched over with interest by, the highest personages in the realm, the design of the promoters is understood to be, not only the provision of homes for decayed actors and actresses, but also the completion of a Dramatic College in the fuller sense of the phrase, wherein childhood and old age may be associated—wherein Spring and Winter may flourish together, and both put forth their seasonable

able flowers. Some of the noblest of Old England's charities exhibit this touching union; and never has the satirist of this age more tenderly moved the hearts of his readers, than in that passage of the Newcomes, where the aged brother of the Charter House, listens to the chapel-bell calling the schoolboys to their prayers, and replies to his own solemn summons, "*Adsum!*" The Charter House is one of many similar foundations scattered about the land. It was a happy thought on the part of those who were most earnest in instituting the Dramatic College, to desire that, within the boundaries of the same institution, a school for the player's child should be erected hard by the homes of those who had fallen into the sere and yellow leaf. The homes are completed, but this good work has not yet been begun!

Is there not, in such an undertaking, a
beneficial

beneficial and charitable object, to which the profits of a Metropolitan Tercentenary celebration of Shakespere's nativity might be dedicated? The education of the children of actors can be objected to by none, and is a righteous and goodly aim, that may properly be approved by all!

It would be a great work accomplished—a work of genuine and practical honour to the memory of the Poet, if on a festival, which can only be celebrated by every third generation, a sufficient fund were raised for building and endowing with a few “Shakespere Scholarships,” a Dramatic College School, wherein the children of the hard-worked and humbly-salaried artists could be provided with sound and liberal education, fitting them, when adults, to take their choice of other callings in life than those of their parents, if so disposed; but, under any circumstances

stances, preserving them in their childhood, from the turmoil, fatigue, premature constitutional decline, and inevitable precocity, of baby actors, and Thespian phenomena.

By the erection of such a school, Shakespere's Jubilee, in 1864, would be made a genuine and abiding Jubilee in the families of hundreds of our countrymen, who are painstaking, striving, and respectable men, — who would bless, with grateful hearts, the friends that sympathise with them in their narrow circumstances,—friends that abhor the assumption of patronage, and cordially embrace a rare opportunity of showing concern and care for the player's children, on the festival which commemorates that red-letter day in England's calendar, when, three hundred years ago, sweet Shakespere was himself a child !



APPENDIX.

A—page 16.

The Family of Bott.

THOUGH considerable information has been discovered in the preparation of this work regarding the Botts, as given at pp. 75 to 85, nevertheless, I have not thought it worth while to pursue my inquiries far into their history, as I should had there been anything of interest as regards Shakespere likely to be arrived at by the research.

It will be observed that I have spoken in strong language regarding W. Bott; and, at p. 86, have called him a "grasping lawyer." From the evidence which has come into my possession in researches regarding the sales of New Place, I find that Bott must have been a thoroughly unprincipled, pettifogging attorney, doing all the dirty work of Stratford and its neighbourhood. His character oozes out through the medium of the following proceedings taken in the Star Chamber (*temp.* Elizabeth); and however meagre the details may be, still new light is discernible regarding some members of his family and his position with reference to W. Underhill.

By the Bill of Complaint we are informed that John Harper, of Henley-on-Arderne, co. Warwick, who was possessed of certain lands and tenements in Henley, Ownall, Wotton, and Whitley, in the county aforesaid, was in danger of being taken in execution under a distress at the suit of Sir Edward Aston, Knight. Under which circumstances, being himself a plain and simple-

simple-minded man, he was induced to seek the assistance of W. Bott, of Stratford, a man of about fifty years of age, and reputed of some experience and ability, to advise him properly.

Bott had two sons and three daughters, and finding his client possessed of some substance, although under age, made up a match between him and his daughter Isabel; and further, on the 10th of April, 1563, devised a deed of feoffment, whereby Harper should assure to him and others, in fee simple, all his lands to certain uses, unknown to the petitioner, but as far as he conceives, to the use of petitioner and wife, and their heirs, &c., with remainder to one of Bott's sons, promising to extricate him from his difficulties, alleging it was for the better advancement of his wife; and that the said deed was only a conveyance of his goods, and "*that because the goods remained in the house, he must make livery of them by the ring of the door.*" The unsuspecting youth fell into the snare, being easily led to do whatever his father-in-law instructed him, who, not content with this, if we may believe the allegations of the petitioner, forged, erased, and altered other deeds concerning the said conveyance; indeed, in the preamble of the bill, which we must bear in mind was framed probably some six or seven years after (Mrs. Harper being dead in the interim, without children), he denounces him as "*a man clearly void of all honesty, fidelity, or fear of God, and openly detected of divers great and notorious crimes, as, namely, felony, adultery, whoredom, falsehood, and forging, a procurer of the disinherison of divers gentlemen your Majesty's subjects, a common barretour, and stirrer of sedition amongst your Majesty's poor subjects.*"

This nefarious proceeding, executed without the consent or privity of petitioner, places him in the position that he cannot lease his lands, &c., without Bott's consent, and that, in point of fact, he is only tenant thereto for life. Having thus wrested petitioner's

tioner's possessions, he withholds too the evidences and muniments of the same—the contents, and even the number of which are utterly unknown to petitioner. He prays, therefore, a writ of subpena for W. Bott personally to appear and answer these charges. Thus far the complainant's statement.

Bott denies the facts alleged as slanders emanating from complainant and his adherents, and declares that if the premises were true, it were determinable at common law, and not in the court of Star Chamber, stating that about six years ago, complainant being a minor, did marry his daughter Isabel, at which time he promised on arriving at twenty-one he would make her a jointure; but instead thereof, becoming improvident, he mortgaged his lands, and fell into difficulties. Thereupon, coming to his father-in-law in tears, he besought his assistance, which he readily promised on these conditions, viz., that he should assure his estate, or rather the portion left unsquandered, to himself and wife, or the longest liver of them, then to their issue, failing which, to the various sons and daughters of the said Bott in succession, for which defendant undertook to satisfy Sir Edward Aston and divers other creditors. The catalogue of crimes hurled at his reputation he meets by a countercharge, and declares it to be by the "*false and malicious procurement of one William Underhill and Rowland Whelar, which that the said defendant is ready to aver and prove that the said Underhill is a stirrer of sedition, and of a very evil conscience, and so meet to join with the said Whelar, a very common barretour and a vagabond.*" Further, he denies the truth of the statement about his own procurement of the marriage, for the complainant was married three or four years before the affair of Sir Edward Aston. All the other charges he denies *in toto seriatim*.

The replication of Harper denies the statement about the jointure, and that whatever mortgage he made, which would be but trifling, was at Bott's instigation. The debts, too, as paid by defendant, were of
no

no magnitude; some eight pounds would cover the whole, including that of Sir Edward Aston, in discharge of which defendant yet detaineth £9, which petitioner recovered against Sir Edward, and detains moreover a sum of 40 marks which he promised to give with his daughter as her dowry, &c.

So far from W. Underhill being meet to be matched with any vagabond, he is, on the contrary, "*a gentleman of a worshipful calling in his country, and very well known to all honest men to be of good estimation, and of very good name, report, and credit, a maintainer of justice, and a represser of evil doers.*" That Sir Edward Aston's suit against petitioner was commenced long before his marriage, is also untruly alleged.

The rejoinder by Bott denies generally the truth of the statements in the foregoing replication, and says further that he never did promise complainant any bigger sum than £20, which he did pay before they went to the church to be married, and avers that complainant is maintained and supported in his slanders by the said W. Underhill and his companion, Rowland Whelar, as named in the answer.

By taking the year 1563 as the date of the marriage, or thereabouts, and adding six years, the time noted by Bott in his answer, the probable date of these proceedings would be about 1569.

It will be seen at p. 77, that there was a near relationship at one period between the Botts and the Cloptons. In the Domestic Correspondence, Eliz., vol. cxxxvii., art. 68, anno. 1580, among the Gentlemen and Freeholders in the Countie of Warwick appears,

"Hundred of Hemlingford,
"George Bott."

In another similar work appears,

"Solyhull,
"George Boote."

(Intended for Bott, as there was a family so named at Solyhull at that date.)

From

From various traces of the name, cropping-up in this way, I have satisfied myself that an extensive family of the Botts was scattered about Warwickshire in Shakespere's time; and if it were worth while, a very slight inquiry in the parish registers in the neighbourhood of Stratford would probably supply abundant evidence concerning them. There was a moment when I entertained the suspicion that the Botts had been mixed up with some foul play perpetrated in the Clopton family, in the time of William and Anne Clopton.

On perusing the following documents, any reader would naturally suppose, as I at first did, that a William Clopton, and Anne his wife, living about the years 1580 to 1589, would be the William and Anne marked "C" upon the Pedigree, more especially as the circumstance of this William Clopton dying without an heir, gives countenance to the allegations in the following Bill of Complaint. I had not then compiled the Clopton Pedigree, and consequently was not aware that William Clopton (C) lived until 1592, and that Kentwell, in Suffolk, was no part of the property of that branch of the Clopton family seated at Clopton, Warwickshire. This proves the necessity for an intimate acquaintance with family pedigrees when we deal with public records, otherwise a confounding of persons may easily arise, such as in this instance would be most natural, where we find documents relating to persons of particular names at a fixed date, and then discover that persons of the same names—*man and wife*—and at the same date, lived in another county.

Bill of Complaint of Anne Clopton, &c.*

"Showing that her late husband, William Clopton,
" Esq.

* Proceedings in Chancery, *temp.* Eliz., C. c. 13, No. 3. Date inscribed on the top, 12 May, 1589. Counts of three documents only, the answer of the defendants not appearing to be extant.

“ Esq., of Kentwell, in county of Suffolk, leased sundry
 “ manors and lands to William Clopton of Groughton,
 “ and another, to pay £40 per annum for the same,
 “ &c. &c. Thomas Clopton (a brother of the half
 “ blood to the said William, complainant’s late husband)
 “ used subtle means to obtain the lands from the right
 “ heirs, persuading the said William Clopton who was
 “ enfeebled by long sickness, to disinherit his next heirs,
 “ and to convey his whole estate to the said Thomas
 “ Clopton, inducing him to make his will by the which
 “ he left only one legacy of very small amount to one
 “ of his servants, and nothing to his wife or his sisters,
 “ or sisters’ children, &c. &c. Prays a writ of subpœna,
 “ &c. &c., as Thomas Clopton, William Clopton of
 “ Groughton, and John Bowfell, the other defendant,
 “ have procured the property to be conveyed to them-
 “ selves, and have made themselves masters of all.”

Replication of Anne Clopton to the Answer of
 William Clopton and John Bowfell:

“ States that John Bowfell, defendant, was servant
 “ to William Clopton, complainant’s late husband, and
 “ that during his long continued illness it was insinuated
 “ by defendants to William Clopton, that Anne his
 “ wife, and one Thomas Smith, a nephew of William
 “ Clopton, employed poison, whereupon she desired that
 “ she might go away from him for some little time,
 “ until he were recovered and better persuaded con-
 “ cerning such slander; to which her husband replied
 “ that Thomas Clopton was a bad, lewd fellow, and
 “ used such speeches of her as were not decent to
 “ rehearse. Finally, she went to the house of one
 “ Lady Pelham, of Suffex, and there abode until
 “ Edward Lovell, now servant to Thomas Clopton,
 “ administered a potion to William Clopton, which
 “ was a purgative or such like, from the effects of
 “ which he died, whereas had it happened during her
 “ residence with him, she would have been charged as
 “ accessory to his death.”

The

The Rejoinder of Thomas Clopton, Esq., and John Bowfell, to the above Replication of Anne Clopton :

“ Denies the allegations attributing her leaving to the
“ indiscreet behaviour of complainant, and unnatural
“ dealing towards her late husband, whom she neither
“ loved nor obeyed ; condemns the statement about
“ Lovell as slander ; deposes to the perfect state of
“ the faculties of William Clopton, and his powers of
“ memory and appetite, &c.”

B—page 16.

It would appear from the mention in this place
“ between 1563 and 1570,” that there is some uncertainty about the date of sale by W. Bott to W. Underhill, whereas the exact date, Michaelmas Term, 1567, is given with a copy of the Fine at p. 85. The truth is, that when paragraph 3rd, p. 16, was stereotyped, I had not discovered the Fine given at p. 85 ; and rather than cancel the page, I preferred to make the correction in this place.

C—page 19.

The general reader had better be warned, particularly if he should be a reader of Malone, against falling into the error into which that author, in the original edition of his *Shakespeare's Works*, would betray him.

The statement there made, both as to the Nash pedigree, and as to the manner in which New Place passed from owner to owner, is completely erroneous. The fact is well known to every Shakespearean scholar but it may be as well to set it forth distinctly. Malone says—

“ Sir

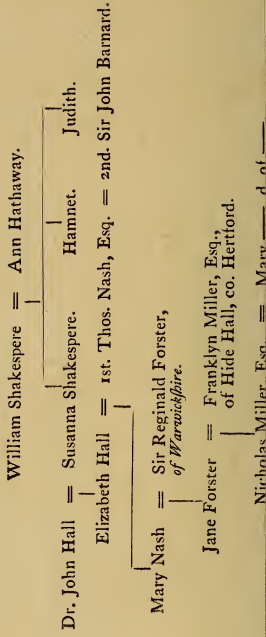
"Sir John Clopton, Knt. (the father of Edward
 "Clopton, Esq., and Sir Hugh Clopton), who died at
 "Stratford-upon-Avon in April, 1719, purchased the
 "estate of New Place, etc., some time after the year
 "1685, from Sir Reginald Forster, Bart., who married
 "Mary, the daughter of Edward Nash, Esq., cousin-
 "german to Thomas Nash, Esq., who married our
 "poet's grand-daughter, Eliz. Hall. Edward Nash
 "bought it after the death of her second husband,
 "Sir John Barnard, Knt. By her will, she directed
 "her trustee, Henry Smith, to sell the New Place,
 "etc. (after the death of her husband), and to make
 "the first offer of it to her cousin, Edward Nash,
 "who purchased it accordingly. His son, Thomas
 "Nash (whom, for the sake of distinction, I shall call the
 "younger), having died without issue in August, 1652,
 "Edward Nash, by his will, made on the 16th March,
 "1678-9, devised the principal part of his property to
 "his daughter Mary, and her husband, Reginald
 "Forster, Esq., afterwards Sir Reginald Forster; but
 "in consequence of the testator's only referring to a
 "deed of settlement executed three days before, with-
 "out reciting the substance of it, no particular mention
 "of New Place is made in his will. After Sir John
 "Clopton had bought it from Sir Reginald Forster, he
 "gave it by deed to his younger son, Sir Hugh, who
 "pulled down our poet's house and built one more
 "elegant on the same spot."

Malone's errors in the above passage are extraor-
 dinary, because they are not only errors as to pedigree,
 but errors as to sales and purchases, which the smallest
 amount of investigation would have proved to him to
 have been incorrect. It is easy to set him right upon
 the pedigree, but impossible to conceive how he could
 be so misled as to make the series of egregious blunders
 which will appear in the above extract when it is
 compared with the correct statement, in par. 7, p. 19.

I give the pedigree which was accepted by Stevens
 and Malone first, and then the correct one. By the
 first

NASH AND FORSTER PEDIGREE.

No. 1.—ERRONEOUS.



first it will be seen that it was supposed there was a lineal descendant of Shakespere in the female line; by the second it is apparent that there was no such descent.

If the reader happens to be familiar with the *original* edition of Malone, he will be struck by the discrepancy between my statement, at p. 19, and the statement made by Malone. It will be found on reference to Boswell's edition of Malone, 1821, that the error in the original edition had been discovered, and was corrected by Boswell. Malone had been misled by the incorrect pedigree (No. 1), which had been supplied to Mr. Stevens by Mr. Whalley, upon which Malone had relied. It represented the existence of direct descendants from Elizabeth Nash, Shakespere's granddaughter, and that Sir Reginald Forster, of East Greenwich, married the daughter of Elizabeth and Thomas Nash, thereby coming into possession of New Place. The error arose from mistaking the daughter of Edward Nash, Esq. (A), of East Greenwich—cousin-german of Thomas Nash, of Stratford—and supposing her to have been the child of Thomas Nash, who never had any children by his wife, Elizabeth Hall. To avoid any further errors upon this subject, the reader is cautioned against the statement made in Malone's original edition, which was set right by Boswell in the 1821 edition.

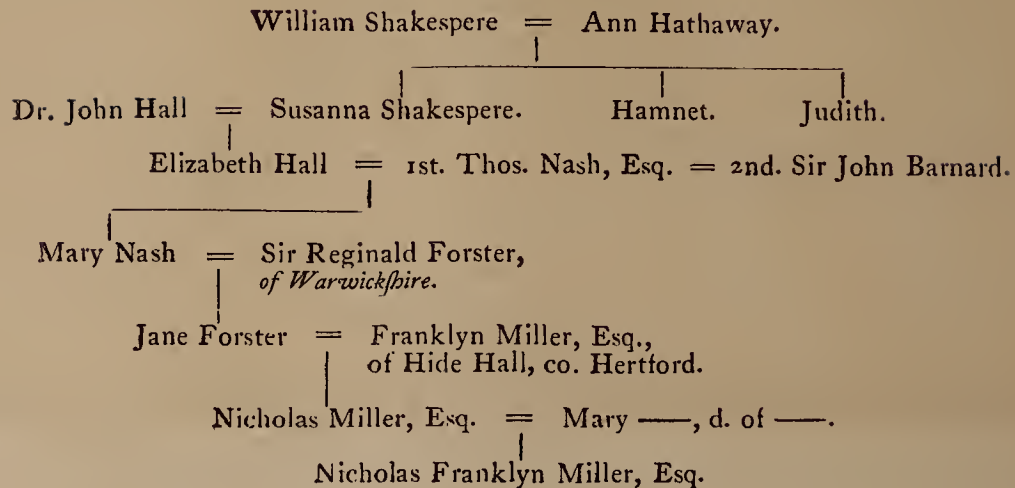
D—page 51.

Jordan.

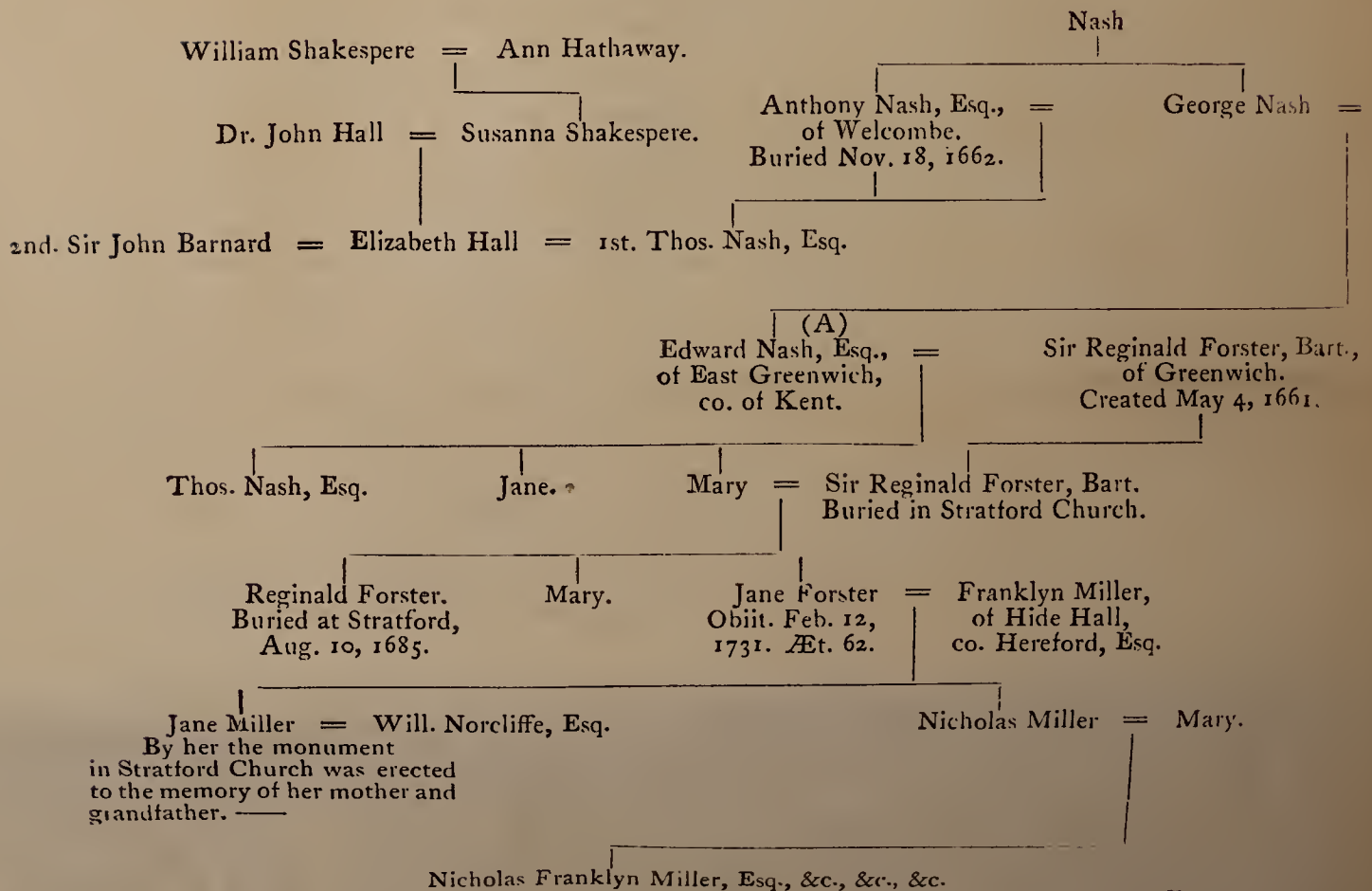
Gentlemen's Magazine, October, 1800, p. 1000.—
 "When Ireland was engaged upon his 'Picturesque
 "View of the Avon, he navigated down this poetic
 "stream attended by a very modest and well-informed
 "man, Mr. John Jordan,' &c. It was Mr. Jordan who
 "gave

NASH AND FORSTER PEDIGREE.

No. 1.—ERRONEOUS.



No. 2.—CORRECT.



“gave Mr. Ireland his first information on which
 “he created his visionary falsehood (the Shakespere
 “forgeries).”

Ditto, 1809, September, p. 885.—“It is conjectured
 “that many of his (Jordan’s) tales respecting Shake-
 “spere were from his own inventive genius.”

E—page 57.

The Clopton Arms.

The porch of the Chapel of the Holy Cross has been allowed to fall into such a state of decay, that only one of the four shields which once adorned it can now be read. It is the one bearing the arms of London.

The shields, as they originally appeared, are given by Dugdale, and could easily be restored. A beautiful coat of the Cloptons will be found inside the chapel, adorning the porch at the entrance. It is unfortunately buried under the clumsy and offensive gallery which has been erected over the line of the screen which originally divided the chapel from a small ante-chapel. Holy Cross is one of the most painful specimens of plasterers’, painters’, and carpenters’ church restoration. Its pews and fittings are most substantial, most serviceable, and most detestable.

It is well known to every one acquainted with the building, that its walls are adorned with a series of frescoes of the most interesting description. These have been carefully hidden under coats of yellow wash. Everything that the Corporation of Stratford could do to disguise this venerable pile, has been done. The ancient oak screen has been hidden behind the gallery; the exquisite stonework of the porchway has been mutilated; and all that the most barbaric Protestant taste could accomplish to convert the building into the appearance of a comfortable conventicle, has been thoroughly

thoroughly carried out. There are only three features, internally, of this building, that carry us back in imagination to Sir Hugh Clopton's time. 1st. His shield and quarterings, which have happily escaped destruction on one side of the doorway. 2nd. The tracery of the windows. 3rd. A beautiful piece of mediæval iron-work—the handle of the priests' door, passing from the chancel to the garden formerly occupied by the priests' houses, attached to the present grammar school.

The sooner the Corporation of Stratford set about a restoration of this chapel—clean the walls and reproduce the frescoes; remove the frightful and useless gallery blocking up the lovely tower arch; restore the screen to its proper place, and fit up the building with open benches and stalls—the more it will be to their credit.

Instead of introducing the following facts in the Clopton Pedigree, I have reserved them to be inserted here. It will have been seen that on the death of Mrs. Partheriche, the Clopton House Estate passed under her will to Charles Boothby Scrimsher, Esq. (I), who took the name of Clopton. The Pedigree shows that he was the son of Anne Clopton, who married Thomas Boothby, Esq., and the heir-at-law of Mrs. Partheriche at her decease. According to the provisions of that lady's will, in default of issue the estate was to pass to Edward Ingram, Esq. (K, Pedigree), the son of Barbara Clopton and Ashton Ingram; and, in case of default, to his brother John or his heirs, all of whom were tenants for life. In case of no issue in any of these families, the estate was to pass to one Anthony Clopton, of Ireland, who had persuaded Mrs. Partheriche that he was descended from the Clopton family. C. B. Scrimsher Clopton died 1815, without issue; Edward Ingram died 1818, without issue; John Ingram died, aged 90, November 20, 1824, without issue. The said Anthony Clopton died in like manner without issue. The estate then came to a Mrs. Noel (L),

(L), a sister of the above C. B. Scrimsher Clopton. She, being next heir to the estate, during its possession by the above-named John Ingram Clopton (for, by the will, every possessor was bound to assume the name of Clopton) sold the reversion to Charles Meynell, Esq., for £10,000 in money, and an annuity of £300 per annum; the £10,000 being to pay the debts of her brother Charles Boothby, who, having been greatly embarrassed, committed suicide.

Charles Meynell, Esq., the purchaser of the reversion, died in 1815, leaving two sons and a widow, Elizabeth, who married Samuel Stoddart, Esq.; and they conjointly, by a decree of the Court of Chancery, sold Clopton House and estate for £50 an acre, the purchase-money (279 acres) amounting to £13,975; the buildings on the estate being further valued at £781. The timber sold for £548; and the Clopton pews, in Stratford church, with two smaller ones, for £100; the Clopton meadow, for £1,500; and the furniture and FAMILY PICTURES IN THE HOUSE, for £55!!! The whole were purchased for £16,959 15s. 6d., by George Loyd, Esq., of Welcombe, Stratford, in October, 1830. Mr. Loyd died in July, 1831, leaving the Clopton and Welcombe estate to his brother, John Gamaliel Loyd, Esq., for his life, and afterwards to his nephew, Charles Warde, Esq., the present possessor. There were some legal difficulties, owing to the non-completion of the purchase prior to Mr. Loyd's death, which were set right by an order in Chancery, but they are of no interest to the public. The above facts furnish those who may be interested in the subject with a correct account of the hands through which the Clopton estate has passed since the extinction of the direct descent, as traced upon the Pedigree, down to the present moment.

F—page 87.

Underhill.

The history of the settlement of the Underhill family at Eatington, near Stratford, is curious and amusing. The facts now related are gathered from the elaborate notice of Eatington and of the Shirley family contained in the MSS. of the late Rev. Mr. Warde.

The Pedigree I have given shows that the Underhills came originally from Wolverhampton. They settled at Eatington in the first year of the reign of Henry VIII., owing to John Underhill marrying for his second wife one Agnes Porter, of Eatington. This John obtained a lease for 80 years of the manor of Eatington, from Sir Ralph Shirley, Knight. This was an amorous knight, who married in succession four wives,—the last in the year 1514. This lady, a daughter of Sir Robert Sheffield, bore him a son, Francis, who was left fatherless in the first year of his life—January, 1517. Being very much his own master, before he was of age this foolish youth married a widow, the relict of Sir John Congreve, of Stretton, county Stafford, and likewise the daughter of his guardian, Sir John Giffard. The widow Congreve brought with her to her young husband's home two daughters by her late spouse, Elizabeth and Ursula Congreve.

By turning to the Underhill Pedigree, it will be seen that the two sons of Edward Underhill, of Eatington, eventually married these two young ladies, and the reader will not be surprised to hear what followed.

By a lease, dated April 28, 1541, the above-named Francis Shirley was induced to grant the whole of his ancient Warwickshire property, except the right of presentation to the church of Nether Eatington, to Edward Underhill and his eldest son, Thomas, for a term of 100 years. This lease was the cause of much unpleasantness and of a long series of lawsuits, which
were

were not finally determined until the year 1652. The Underhills were accused of having obtained this valuable lease of the Shirleys' lands by the procurement of the mother of the young ladies, Dorothy Congreve, who had married Francis Shirley. The following extracts, made from depositions taken at Shipston-upon-Stour, illustrate the times, and the characters of Francis Shirley and his wife :—

“Ralph Brokesby, of Sholbye, in the county of Leiceſter, Eſq., being examined, depoſed—

“That Francis Shirley did not meddle in the management of his eſtate, only in his horſes, hounds, and deer in his park at Staunton, wherein he took great delight ; but referred the reſidue to be ordered, and for the moſt part to be diſpoſed of, by the ſaid Dorothy his wife, and her friends, who ruled the ſame, and eſpecially his hoſpitality and houſekeeping, with great frugality and worſhip, to her ſingular commendation, as well for preſervation of his woods, keeping his houſe in good repair, and all other things whatſoever. From ſuch converſation and dealings as he had with and for the ſaid Francis Shirley, and his ſon, John Shirley, he judged that Eatington be now (1613) worth £200 per annum more than the 40 marks paid for it (by the Underhills). Moreover, he depoſeth, that Thomas Underhill, and Elizabeth his wife, did make an attempt to have had from Francis Shirley the Fee farm of the manor of Eatington for £200 in money, wherein they had prevailed if they had not been providently prevented by John Shirley, and further he gave his advice to John Shirley ſo to do.”

Deſpite the litigation, the ſenior branch of the Underhills retained poſſeſſion of Eatington until the expiration of the leaſe, in 1641, when the heir removed to Upthrop, in the pariſh of Alderminſter, county of Worceſter.

During the reign of Elizabeth, the proſperity of the Underhills was at its height ; and it was in Shakeſpere's time

time that they acquired lands in and about Stratford, and in numerous parishes about Easington.

Our interest, in this work, is directed to the junior branch of the family, and therefore the senior line has not been given in the Pedigree. The founder of this junior line was William (A), (the younger son of the above-named Edward), who married one of the sisters Congreve—Urfula.

He was the father of William Underhill (B), who purchased New Place from Bott, and sold it subsequently to Shakespeare. Concerning these persons, I have gathered some interesting information, which will show their connection with the county, and particularly with Stratford-upon-Avon.

(S.P.O. Domestic Correspondence, Elizabeth, vol. cxxxvii. art. 68, 69).

Art. 68.—“*A Booke of the Names of the Gentlemen and Freeholders in the Countie of Warwick.* 1580.”

“Hundred de Kington :

* * * *

Tho. Undrill, gent.

* * * *

“Hundred de Barlichway :

* * * *

Wm. Clopton, Esqr.

* * * *

Wm. Underhill, gent.

* * * *

John Coomes, gent.

* * * *

John Shakespeare.

* * * *

Thomas Shakespeare.

* * * *

John Shakespeare.

* * * *

Art. 69.—

Art. 69.—Another Book, intituled, “*A Booke of the Names and Dwelling-places of the Gentlemen and Freeholders in the Countie of Warwick.* 1580.”

(Under Idlicote, no Underhills are placed ; the names of Richd. Hall and Wm. Mershall occurring only.)

“ Allington Inferior :

* * * *

Tho. Underhill, gent.

* * * *

“ Stretford-upon-Avon :

* * * *

Wm. Claptun, Esquier.

* * * *

John Shaxper.

* * * *

Wm. Underhill, gent.

* * * *

“ Rowington :

* * * *

Tho. Shaxpere.

* * * *

The following documents, an abstract of the will of William Underhill (A), and the will in full of his son (B)—Shakespeare's Underhill—seem to me to complete all the information regarding this family which it is necessary to publish.

G—page 88.

Abstract of Will of William Underhill.

(*Vide Pedigree, A*).

WILLIAM UNDERHILL makes his will on the 1st day of December, anno. 12 Eliz. (1569), and describes himself therein as of "Newbold Revell, in Com: Warr. Gent."* In the first place he expresses his desire to be buried by his dearly beloved wife, in the parish of Nether Eatington. He then proceeds to express his intentions as to the disposition of his property, as follows:—To his heir, &c., the third part of all his manors, lands, and tenements; the rest (the manor of Idlicote being held *in capite*) to his executors, with all "leafes, goodes, cattell, plate, and household stuffe," to fulfil the intents and meaning of his will, and to bring up his children.

He prohibits most emphatically to his heirs the alienation of his lands, except for their lives, their wives' lives, or leafes for xxj years. Prohibits his son, W. Underhill, from marrying before the age of twenty-four, without the consent of his brother Shirley, brother Brokesby, brother Thomas Underhill, and brother Congreve, or their heirs, &c., &c.

In the event of his son dying, or going about to alienate or sell his lands, he provides that they shall pass

* I find that the manor of Idlicote was alienated by Louis Greville to William Underhill (A), in the 10th of Eliz., and that in the following year the same Louis Greville alienated to the same William Underhill the manor of Loxley. It will be observed that on the Pedigree I have described this William (A), as of Idlicote and Loxley, while in his will he describes himself as of "Newbold Revell." The above facts will explain the reason. He was commonly known, when he made his will (1569), as Underhill of Newbold Revell, the Idlicote and Loxley property having been acquired only during the two years previous.

pals to testator's brother, John. The properties in the will enumerated are the manor of Idlicote, lands and tenements in Idlicote, Coxley, and Hollington, lands in Kington-Basset, Barton, Meryden, Alspathe, and Efenell, in the county of Warwick aforesaid. The testator mentions a brother Humphrey. Also a brother Thomas, and the said Thomas's son, Francis (his godson), as follows :—

“ And also I do give to my brother Thomas, untell his son Francis Underhill my godson be of the age of xxiiij yeres and then only to the said Frauncis and to the heires males of the very body of the said Frauncis lawfully begotten as is aforesaid and with like condition and untill such time as is aforesaid all my landes and tenementes with their appurtenances in Haselor *Stretforde-upon-Aven* and Drayton in the county of Warwick and in the parish of Wolverhampton in the county of Stafford ” &c.

Two more sons of his brother Thomas are also mentioned, viz., George and Humphrey. Also Humphrey, son of his brother John. Testator mentions by name his three daughters, Dorothy, Margaret, and Anne, to each of whom there is a bequest of £500.

To his son William, he leaves his signet of gold. To each of his daughters “one silver spone;” to Dorothe her mother's wedding-ring and one bracelet of gold; to his second daughter, “my late most loving wife Newport's* wedding-ringe;” to my youngest daughter, “a little chain of gold, and one other of my first wife's ringes.”

Legacies are bequeathed to his brother John's children,

* This was his second wife, who had pre-deceased him little more than a year, her will (which was made by license of her husband) having been proved on the 28th of January, 1569. She was the widow of Richard Newport, of Hemingham, by whom she had a son, John, and four daughters, Constance, Elizabeth, Ursula, and Mary.

dren, to his sifter Dalby's children, to his sifter Wykeham's children, and to his sifter Mynofa.

Allusion is made to an Elizabeth Underhill, his god-daughter, his sifter Wynifred's daughters, and his sifter Tamer's daughters. He provides, in the event of any difficulty arising about the interpretation of his will, that it shall be referred to the judgment and arbitration of his friend, Sir James Dier, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas.

He strenuously urges more than once (reiterating the same desire at the conclusion) the non-alienation of his lands, and particularly requests that his daughters do not throw themselves away in marriage; and should they marry contrary to his determination and appointment, or "offend and misuse" themselves in carnall or adulterous lyvyng and the "same be duely proved" that then the portions and bequests allotted them shall be null and void.

This will was proved at London on the 10th day of April, A.D. 1570, the testator having departed this life, according to the *inquisition post mortem*, on the last day of March preceding.

H—page 90.

The Will of William Underhill. (Vide Pedigree, B.)

"In the Name of God Amen WILLIAM UNDER-
 "HILL of Idlicott in the countie of Warwicke
 "Esquier beinge of perfect minde and memorie did as
 "well in the sixth daie of Julie anno domini 1597 as
 "at divers other tymes or at least once in the tyme of
 "his sicknes whereof he died make and declare his
 "last will and testament nuncupative in manner and
 "forme followeing or the like in effect viz. First he
 "revoked all former wills and testaments by him
 "made

“ made or declared and willed that his daughter Do-
 “ rothie shold have for her parte five hundred poundes
 “ and all her jewells and that his younger daughter
 “ named Valentine shold also have other five hundred
 “ poundes. Likewise he willed that his eldest sonne
 “ Foulke Underhill shold have all his landes and that
 “ in regarde thereof if he lived he should be charge-
 “ able to perform all such promises and grauntes as
 “ shall at anie tyme hereafter appeare to be made by
 “ him the saide William Underhill in his life time for
 “ which he had received monie. And further he
 “ willed that if the saide Foulke Underhill should
 “ happen to die, then his next heire that shall inherite
 “ shold be chargeable to performe the same his pro-
 “ mises and grauntes. Also he willed that everie of his
 “ othersonnes should have two hundred poundes a peece.
 “ Likewise he the same William Underhill declared
 “ that he had oweinge unto him two thousande poundes
 “ for the which he had specialties. And that one
 “ Master Bassett owed unto him threescore and tenne
 “ poundes for which he had nothing to shewe. Lastlie
 “ he constituted and appointed Master George Sherley
 “ Esquier and Master Thomas Sherley his brother
 “ executors of the same his last will and testament and
 “ humbly desired that it wold please them to take
 “ uppon them the execution thereof. And this his saide
 “ last will and testament he soe made and by worde
 “ declared in the presence of divers credible witnesses.

“ Proved at London, on the 9th day of August
 “ AD 1597, by the oath of Alexander Serle
 “ notary public, the proctor of George Sherley
 “ Esq. and Thomas Sherley, the executors
 “ above named.”

It will be observed that in the above will of W. Un-
 derhill (B), he leaves two members of the Shirley
 family his executors; from which we may gather that
 the dispute between the Shirleys and senior branch of
 the

the Underhills of Eatington did not affect the junior branch at Idlicote.

For those who are fond of church-hunting, and reading heraldic achievements, Eatington offers peculiar attractions. It is the burial-place of the distinguished families of Shirley and Ferrers, and is rich in monumental remains. There are memorials likewise to several of the Underhills. Edward Underhill, whose sons married the twin Congreves, is thus remembered—

“ Here lyeth buried under this stone Edward
 “ Underhill, sometime gentleman of this Town,
 “ with Margaret, sometime his Wife: which Edward
 “ diseased this world the fifth day of November,
 “ A.D. M.D.XLVI.

“ *On whose follys Jhesu have mercy. Amen.*”

Thomas, the eldest son of the above, and Elizabeth Congreve, his wife, are also held in memory, with a very lengthy inscription, of which the following is but a small part. Their monumental virtues are immense:

“ Here lyeth buried the bodyes of Thomas Under-
 “ hill, of this Towne, Esquier, and Elizabeth his wife,
 “ who lived married together in perfect amitie about
 “ 65 years, and had issue between them xx children:
 “ viz. XIII sons, and VII daughters. . . . She dyed
 “ 24 Junii, An. D. 1603; and he the 6th day of Octo-
 “ ber next after. . . .

“ *God they feared: God they served: God they loved:*
 “ *and to God they dyed.*”

As far as this book is concerned, the most interesting of all the monuments is that of the William Underhill (A) from whose son Shakespere purchased New Place. The inscription runs as follows:—

“ Here lyeth William Underhill of the Inner
 “ Temple of London, gentleman: of Edward Underhill,
 “ Esquier, second son; and Ursula his dearly beloved
 “ wife

“ wife, youngest daughter of John Congreve of Stret-
 “ ton, in Com. Staff. Esquier, whose life was a spectacle
 “ unto all honest, virtuous, and obedient wives: she dyed
 “ the XIIIth day of May, An : Dom : M.D.L.X.I.

“ *Upon whose souls Christ have mercy. Amen.*”

(No date is given of the death of this William Underhill (A) ; but the period is fixed by the proving of his will in April, 1570, as above.)

I—page 131.

De Quincey.

De Quincey's article on Shakespere in the old edition of the “*Encyclopædia Britannica*,” is probably known to a comparatively small number of persons. Probably had he been alive at this time, and having such an article to write, he would not have produced the one in question ; probably, also, in his complete works, now issuing from the press, and so beautifully got up, we shall never find the article in question. But the well-worn phrase is painfully applicable, “*literæ scriptæ manent.*” Whatever such a man as De Quincey might write, is sure to leave its mark ; and therefore, when a giant hits a giant's blow, we must look for the necessary confusion. De Quincey used his strength to bruise the reputation of Shakespere ; and it is a very sorry apology, when you have disfigured a man, to beg his pardon, and say you did not intend to hit so hard.

The result of De Quincey's article has been precisely what any one might expect. Men who have never read that article, perhaps never heard of it, have received through other channels of information the impression made by De Quincey. In this way, minds receive prejudices which no regret on the part of the writer of an
 article

article can prevent. I can quite believe that if De Quincey could, years ago, have torn out from the pages of the *Encyclopædia* his article on Shakespeare, he would have done so. But that can never be done; and though it be suppressed in his works, or otherwise huddled away, it cannot be obliterated from the pages of the work in which it remains, unaffailable. For this reason I have dwelt upon it, and referred to it, hoping that the attention of those who read these pages may thereby be drawn to the subject, and that a proper antidote may be administered to the baneful influence which such an article as De Quincey's has had, and would still have if treated with silence. It is far more healthy and more just to drag it into the open day, point to its injurious paragraphs, and say openly—These words ought never to have been written; they are unjustifiable; they are the mere conjectures of a man who must have regretted writing them, and who never would have written them had he acquainted himself thoroughly with the customs of the times in which Shakespeare lived.

I give one extract from De Quincey to show how he wrote, and to explain the tone assumed by me in the body of this work.

He is commenting on the marriage bond (pp. 29, 30, 31):—

“What are we to think of this document? Trepidation and anxiety are written upon its face. . . .
 “As the daughter of a substantial yeoman, who would expect some fortune in his daughter's suitor, she (Anne Hathaway) had, to speak coarsely, a little outlived her market. Time, she had none to lose. William Shakespeare pleased her eye, and the gentleness of his nature made him an apt subject for female blandishments—possibly for female arts. Without imputing to this Anne Hathaway anything so hateful as a settled plot for ensnaring him, it was easy enough for a mature woman, armed with such inevitable advantages of experience and of self-possession, to
 “draw

“draw onward a blushing novice, and, without directly
 “creating opportunities, to place him in the way of
 “turning to account such as naturally offered.

“Young boys are generally flattered by the conde-
 “scending notice of grown-up women,” &c.
 “Once, indeed, entangled in such a pursuit, any person
 “of manly feelings would be sensible that he had no
 “retreat; *that* would be to insult a woman grievously—
 “to wound her sexual pride—and to insure her lasting
 “scorn and hatred. These were consequences which
 “the gentle-minded Shakespere could not face. He
 “pursued his good fortunes, half perhaps in heedless-
 “ness, half in desperation, until he was roused by the
 “clamorous displeasure of her family upon first disco-
 “vering the situation of their kinswoman. For such
 “a situation there could be but one atonement, and
 “that was hurried forward by both parties, whilst, out
 “of delicacy towards the bride, the wedding was not
 “celebrated in Stratford, where the register contains
 “no notice of such an event.” (and much
 more to the same effect).

The reader will now understand the emphasis used
 in various portions of this book; and will, perhaps,
 wonder with me that Shakespere's was not too
 honoured a name to be dealt with so flippantly by a
 famed author in a great national work.

Let it be said of the above, that it is—every syllable
 —an unsupported and degrading conjecture; that the
 motives and the acts are the base inventions of De
 Quincey's own imagination; and that the man who
 uses his pen to hurt the fair fame of the dead in such
 a fashion, were he twenty times the author and writer
 that De Quincey was, deserves the severest condem-
 nation.

J — page 148.

CLOPTON PEDIGREE.

COMBE, or COMBES.

To work out the Combe Pedigree, and to bring it down correctly to the union between the heiress Martha Combe and Edward Clopton, has cost me an amount of labour, which none but those acquainted with the difficulties of such work will give me credit for.

By the courtesy and kindness of Herald's College, I was enabled to take a copy of the pedigree contained in "Vincent's Warwickshire" (1619). This book was presented by Sheldon to the College in 1684, and is always regarded as a most trustworthy guide. Having possessed myself of this, I next consulted all the Visitations and MSS. at the British Museum which would give any light on the subject, and next I ransacked the registers of Stratford Church. I have at last compiled that Pedigree which will be found on one part of the "Clopton" sheet.

In the main features of this Pedigree I have thought it my duty to accept the authority of Vincent, but I confess I do so with great hesitation, being unable (except upon a conjecture which I have embodied in the Pedigree) to reconcile the conflicting evidence of Vincent's MS. and the unbending entries which I find in the Stratford Register.

To those who are curious in such matters this subject cannot fail to be interesting, and therefore I will go into it fully.

After having gone over the Stratford Register with great care, and assisted by Mr. Butcher, the Parish Clerk, who has revised all my quotations, I find the following to be the whole of the entries with regard to the Combes family about the dates with which we are interested.

Marriages.

Marriages.

1561. August 27.—Johannes Combes, generosus, et Rosa Cloptonne.

Burials.

1573. April 4.—Jone, filia Johannis Combes.

1575. April 8.—Francis, sonne to Mr. John Combs.

1576. June 11.—Francis, sonne to Mr. John Combes.

1577. January 29. — John, sonne to Mr. John Coombes.

1579. Oct. 14.—Mistress Rose, wife to Mr. John Combes.

1584. Feb. 2.—Will, sonne to Mr. John Combes.

1584. May 24.—Mistress Elizabeth, wife to Mr. John Combes.

1614. July 12.—*Mr. John Combes, gentleman.*

We naturally ask, who was this Mr. John Combes? On turning to the inscription upon the altar tomb of John à Combe, in the chancel of Stratford Church, we find it terminating in this fashion. After enumerating the bequests of the deceased, it concludes,—“Ye wich increafe he apoynted to be distributed towards the reliefe of ye almes-people theire. More he gave to the poore of Stratford Twenty LI.”

What does that 51 mean? Can it be intended to denote the age of John à Combe at the time of his death? Probably not; but if not, what possible meaning can it have?

The reader will soon see the interest of this inquiry. There is no evidence, that I am aware of, to tell us at what

what age John à Combe died; and there are, unfortunately, so many Combes in the Pedigree named "John," that we are in great danger of confusing one with another. John à Combe, Shakespere's friend, is commonly reputed to have been an old man at the time of his death; but he is also reported to have been an old bachelor. In a MS. given by Mr. Hunter in his New Illustrations, we read of "an old gentleman, "a batchelor, Mr. Combe, upon whose name the "poet," &c., &c.

Assuming that John à Combe was an old bachelor, who was the John with all the children?

The Pedigree shows us that there was another John Combe, living at Warwick, but he had married one Johanna Murcote, and therefore he could not be the husband of Rose Clopton, married in 1561, and dead in 1579, nor yet of "Mistress Elizabeth," who died in 1584.

We are driven, therefore, to the necessity of trying to show that one of the *above-named ladies was the wife of John à Combe's father*. This is what Vincent sets forth in his Pedigree, and it is supported by a note of Malone's. He says, "Mr. Combe married Mrs. Rose Clopton, the youngest daughter of William Clopton of Clopton, Esq. [*it was old John who married Rose Clopton*], August 27, 1561; and therefore was, probably, when he died, eighty years old."

As Vincent was a Warwickshire man, and had full opportunity of acquainting himself personally with the histories of the families he catalogued in his Visitation, we seem bound to conclude that John à Combe's father (John of Stratford) was the husband of Rose Clopton. The register above quoted shows that she lived in wedlock from 1561 to 1579.

During that period, four children of Mr. John Combe's were interred in Stratford Church, viz., Jone, Francis, Francis, John. They evidently were Rose Clopton's offspring, and died in infancy; *but of them there is no mention made in Vincent's Pedigree*. I have introduced

introduced these names with dotted lines, according to heraldic custom, to signify that the descent is doubtful, though there cannot be any doubt upon the point, because the evidence of the Stratford register is overpowering; and therefore in the above omissions, Vincent's Pedigree at Herald's College must be so far incorrect.

But Vincent instructs us that "old John" took Rose Clopton for his *second wife*, and that his celebrated son, John à Combe, was the third offspring of the first marriage with Jocosa, the daughter of Edward Blount, of Kidderminster. It will be seen, on reference, that there were four children by that marriage. Assuming that Jocosa Blount died the year prior to her husband's second marriage, and that her children were born one year after the other, she could not have been married later than 1555 (most probably the date would be two or three years earlier); and assuming that "old John" was twenty years of age when he married, it would give his date of birth about 1535. It is most likely that he was born somewhat earlier, but as marriages were contracted in very young years in those days, we could hardly conjecture his birth as prior to 1532. At the death of his second wife, therefore, he would be about 47 years of age, and not at all too old to marry for the third time. That he did so seems almost certain, because we are encountered with the entry, in 1584, "Mistress Elizabeth, wife to Mr. John Combes." It is quite possible that this lady might have been the wife of John à Combe, for at that date he was probably five and twenty years of age. But as John à Combe is universally reported to have been an old bachelor, this cannot be correct. We have no alternative, therefore, but to conclude that "old John" did marry for the third time, after the death of Rose Clopton, and that "Mistress Elizabeth" was the mother of the child "Will," who was buried February 2, 1584. It was only three months afterwards that the mother followed the child to the grave, and therefore it appears probable

probable that the child's birth and death cost the mother her life also. With the entry of "Mistress Elizabeth's" funeral, all knowledge of "old John," as far as I am acquainted, ends. I am at a loss to understand why Malone guesses "old John" as probably "eighty years old when he died," simply because he married his second wife, Rose, in 1561, at which date he was possibly about thirty years of age—probably somewhat younger. Disproportionate alliances as to years were not fashionable in those days; and we can with certainty conclude that "old John" must have been a youthful bridegroom when he married Rose, because, in 1561, she must have been quite a girl, since her eldest brother, William Clopton (C), was only born in 1537, and was therefore but twenty-four years of age when his sister, the third younger than himself, was married. Rose could not have been more than eighteen or nineteen when she married John Combe; and it is not likely that a girl of eighteen, *in those days*, would marry a man many years older than herself.

It is quite possible that "old John" may have lived until he was eighty years of age. If so, he only died four or five years before his son, John à Combe. The register of Stratford is totally silent on the subject, and I can find no trace there of his death or burial. He may possibly have been interred at Aftley, from whence his family came.

It will be seen that on the Pedigree I have, with the dotted lines of doubt, supplied "old John's" third marriage, and the burial both of his wife and his child, concerning whom Vincent is altogether silent. I conclude his Pedigree *must be defective*, because the Stratford registers will admit of no questions or doubts; their entries are absolute and conclusive evidence.

I confess I have had, and still have, some doubts as to the correctness of Vincent in representing John à Combe as the third child of Jocosa Blount—"Old John's" first wife; though I dare not venture to call in question his pedigree, because it clears up one
great

great difficulty which has never before been explained, and in this respect is evidently correct. Those who have studied John à Combes' Will cannot fail to have been struck with the manner in which he consistently speaks of his "brother John and his children," though he also speaks of his "*Cousin Thomas Combe*," and subsequently calls him "my said nephew, Thomas "Combe."

"Item. I will and bequeath and devise to my COUSIN "Thomas Combe, &c.," . . . "that he the said "Thomas Combe, his heirs and assigns, shall yearly and "every year for every year for ever pay to a learned "preacher twenty shillings to make a sermon twice a "year at Stretford Church, &c., &c.," . . . "and if "my said NEPHEW Thomas Combe . . . shall or "do not pay the said twenty shillings yearly to a "preacher," &c.

There can be no question as to the person here described, nor to the mistake in the drafting of the Will, calling him in the one instance Cousin, and in the other Nephew.

Having discovered one such mistake, I was led to suspect that the term "brother" might be also open to some such explanation, because, though it was constantly the custom, after the death of one child, to christen another by the same Christian name (as we see in the case of the infants "Francis," the sons of "Old John"), nevertheless, we should hardly expect to find two brothers living and both bearing the same title. Vincent's pedigree explains the matter at once. We there see that these Johns, though both sons of "Old John," were, nevertheless, only *half-brothers*—the one being the child of Jocosa Blount, the other of Rose Clopton. Hence at their christenings each received the name "John;" and when John à Combe was making his Will, it was very natural for him to speak of "my brother John."

Having thus fairly acknowledged Vincent's strength and authority, I will frankly allow that I have only weakness to oppose to him in support of my doubts
and

and hesitations. I have undoubtedly proved one of two things. Either Vincent's Pedigree is incorrect in not having supplied us with the names of Rose Clopton's children in full, and with "Old John's" third marriage, and the name both of his wife and child; or he has altogether dropped out of notice some John Combe, of Stratford, and a member of this family, whose wife and family are proved by the register to have existed.

The difficulty might easily be solved if we entertained the idea of John à Combes having once married—his children having died—and that he was left a widower, instead of being a bachelor. This would make things smooth at once; but unfortunately every sort of evidence and tradition agrees with the pedigree in making John à Combe always and ever a bachelor.

We must conclude, therefore, that Vincent altogether overlooked "Old John's" third marriage. May he not, possibly, have confounded the one John with the other, and have made John à Combe by mistake the son of Jocosa Blount, rather than of Rose Clopton?

There is a strong impression on my mind that I have seen it stated that John à Combe was the son of Rose Clopton. If the figures LI upon his tomb are intended to indicate his age, *he must have been*; for reckoning from 1562, the year after Rose Clopton was married, to the year in which John à Combe died, he would have been 51 at the date of his death, July, 1614; added to which, it must be remarked that Vincent's Pedigree does make a "John Combe" to have been Rose Clopton's eldest child, only it represents him as the "brother John," and makes John à Combe the son of the first wife.

As regards the property or the descent coming down to Martha Combe, wife of Edward Clopton, it matters not whether Vincent is right or wrong. The point is of some interest to those who are endeavouring to put together the facts and associations of Shakespere's day, and to trace out the precise relations of those persons
among

among whom he moved in social friendship and intimacy. As I said before, I know my position is weak, and Vincent's very strong. I submit, therefore, to his authority, with the strongest inclination to dispute it. When John à Combe died, in 1614, *he could not, under any circumstances, have been an old man.* I cannot calculate him, though the son of Jocosia Blount, to have been more than sixty at his death. Should it, however, at any time appear that the figures on his tomb denote his real age, it would be a singular coincidence to find that both Shakespere and his attached friend died in their fifty-second year; and those figures would also establish the fact that John à Combe came of the Clopton race, *and must have been the son of Rose Clopton.*

K—page 277.

In case the reader should have a curiosity to see a house exactly like New Place in the last century, I may mention that the new line of railway between Waterloo Station and London Bridge has lately disclosed one. In passing along Union Street, in the Borough, in the narrow part, where the series of arches runs close to the back of the houses on the left (going towards London Bridge), there is a small street, called Gravel Lane. In that street I lately came upon the house referred to, and as it is precisely similar, even in small details, to the prints of New Place (1720), it may be an object of interest to some of my readers.

As it stands close into the angle where the Chatham and Dover Railway, going to Blackfriars Bridge, crosses the extension line from Waterloo to London Bridge, and the Act of Parliament gives powers to purchase this property, it may be well to draw attention to this interesting old house, before the iron Visigoths sweep it away. It belongs to George Vaughan, Esq., of Westbourne Terrace, and has been in possession of his family

family for a considerable period. Mr. Vaughan's tenants, J. H. and G. T. James, batters, have a worthy affection for the old—old place, which stands an ancient landmark in the midst of modern buildings.

Over the doorway, upon a lozenge, is the following inscription :—

I.
D. H.
1703.

The old leaden tank bears date, J. C. E.
1669.

The broad staircase and the panelled rooms are carefully preserved, with the exception of the oak out of one of the rooms, which Mr. Vaughan has lately, and very properly, removed to preserve it, in case he should be compelled to part with his cherished house. Gravel Lane leads down to the Thames, and to the site of the Globe Theatre. The following facts, therefore, become interesting. Mr. James remembers, when he was a boy, some forty years ago, that rows of elm trees skirted the lane; and he can recall the fact of an aged carman in the employ of Messrs. Vaughan, telling him about the year 1820, that when he was a youth, in taking the carts down to the Thames, he was obliged to push the bushes and brambles out of the way to enable the cart to pass.

These facts are striking, because they prove that the land behind the Globe Theatre retained the same rural character to the end of the last century which it must have familiarly presented to the eyes of William Shakespeare.

There was, until a few months ago, a large garden at the back of Gravel Lane House. It is now being built upon by the piers of the Chatham and Dover railway arches. In it, from time to time, many relics have been dug up. Of course there are many houses around London of the same character and date as this house, but none in the direction where it still exists. I have not, however, seen anywhere a house
so

so exactly corresponding to the elevation of New Place (1720). It is the verisimilitude; and, therefore, if the Londoner wishes to see what New Place was like at that date, he has only (before it is too late) to take a walk over Southwark Bridge, and penetrate the now densely-populated and uninviting heart of the Borough, called Gravel Lane.

L—page 317.

The Rev. R. Jago is buried in the side aisle of the nave of Snitterfield Church, of which he was Vicar. As a poet, he was well and deservedly known about Stratford, and many of his productions obtained a much wider popularity. He lives in the pages of "Elegant Extracts." One of the best parodies in the English language, upon Hamlet's soliloquy, "To be or not to be," will be found in that work. It was written by Mr. Jago, and describes the miseries of a would-be poet longing after bays. It commences, "To print, or not to print," and while adhering most closely to the language of Shakespere, admirably depicts the fears and hopes of the depressed rhymester, working up to this climax—

"Thus critics do make cowards of us all."

Mr. Jago died in 1781, *Æt.* 69.

HATHAWAY, M.

(See SHAKESPERE PEDIGREE.)

It appeared to me perfectly unnecessary to encumber the Shakespere Pedigree with the descents of the Hathaways down to their extinction—in the Shottery branch—during the present century. To any one curious on the subject, the Stratford registers will always supply an abundant fund of information.

I have contented myself, therefore, by merely introducing in Shakespeare's Pedigree those names which were absolutely necessary to show the connection with him by marriage; and in this place I have collected together such material as seems to me valuable, in order to preserve a correct record of the latest descents of the Shottery family, and of the way in which the property passed from them to its present owner. As no one has previously undertaken to do what I have thus done, I believe that the following information will not only be valuable on the instant, but in some few years hence will become very valuable to the antiquary, who will thank me for rescuing from oblivion many details which in another generation would have been lost for ever. I am under obligation to Mr. William Thompson, of Stratford, the present owner of Ann Hathaway's Cottage, and also to his solicitors, for the prompt manner in which they laid the title-deeds open to my inspection, and for the manner in which they showed themselves anxious to give me any information they possessed. Though Mr. Thompson is yet a very young man, it was exceedingly agreeable to me to find that the Shottery property had come into the possession of a gentleman who thoroughly appreciates its historic associations, and assures me of his intention to preserve the fabric from spoliation or decay. My thanks are also due to Mrs. Baker, of the Cottage, who, I trust, will have no reason to regret the length of time that we puzzled together in her kitchen over the old family Bible, until we got the Pedigree correct, as far as her knowledge went. It must, indeed, be a source of unending regret to this good woman, when she recalls from day to day her father's sale of the house, which belonged for centuries to the long line of her ancestors. It was a bitter necessity; and every visitor to Ann Hathaway's Cottage must feel with her, and for her.

By the help of Mrs. Baker, Mr. Thompson, his lawyer, and the parish clerk, I have been enabled to
put

put together the accompanying Pedigree. By reading it through, and then perusing the abstracts I have made of deeds in Mr. Thompson's possession, the reader will be put in possession of the history of the Hathaway family during the last hundred years.

Abstracts of Title Deeds, &c., regarding Ann Hathaway's Cottage, Shottery.

I.

Will of John Hathaway of Shottery (Pedigree, A).

"Bequeathes to Ursula Good, now Ursula Kamill, "5s., payable 12 months after the decease of my "mother, Sarah Hathaway.

"Also to my sister, Jane Hathaway, now Jane "Webb (B), the sum of Twenty Pounds.

"Also all Freehold Lands, *i.e.* in fee simple, to my "loving mother, Sarah Hathaway, during her life; and "after her decease, I devise the said

"To my three sisters, Sarah Hathaway (C), Elizabeth "Hathaway (D), and Susannah Hathaway (E), and "their heirs.

"And I hereby nominate my mother, Sarah Hathaway (L), executrix, &c.

"I have hereunto set my seal this 7th day of August, "in the 17th year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord, "George II.

"Proved April 2, 1746."

2.

Will of Sarah Hathaway (C), dated May 3, 1779.

"I give, devise, and bequeath unto my brother-in-law, William Taylor (F), and Susannah (E), his wife, "during their joint lives, and the life of the longest "liver of them, all that my third part or share of and "in a messuage or tenement, lands, hereditaments, and "premises which I may die seized or possessed of or "entitled unto, situate at Shottery aforesaid, in the "possession of the said William Taylor, or elsewhere—

"and

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July, 18, 18
ept. 9th, 1820

= Eliz. J
9. Jan. 3
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d,
49.

Thomas. = Mary Burbridge.
B. June 5, 1789.
Ob. March, 1835.

| | | | | | |

Six children now living (1862.)

athaway Bak
t. 24, 1843.
pprenticed.

Face page 375.

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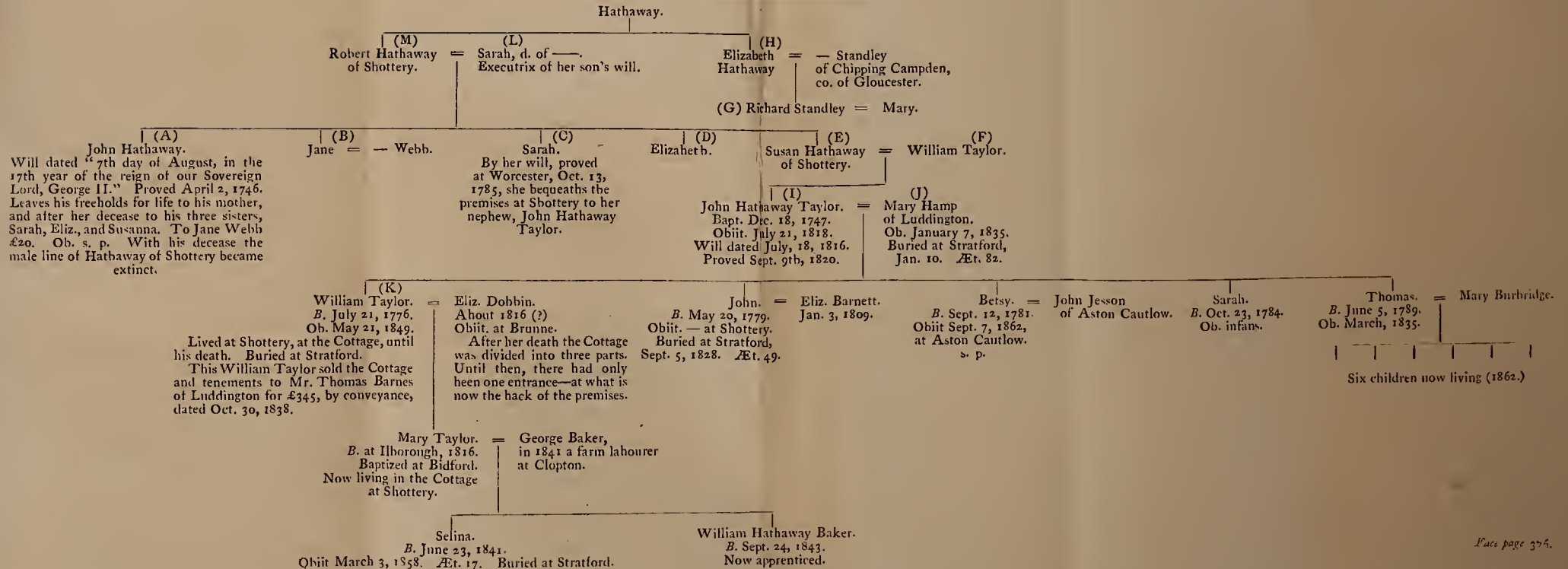
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"and

HATHAWAY.

(The Later Descents of this Family, from its Extinction in the Direct Male Line.)



“and from and after the severall deceases of the said William Taylor and Susannah his wife, then I give, devise, and bequeath all and singular the premises aforesaid unto my nephew, John Hathaway Taylor (H).
 “Proved October 13, 1785, at Worcester.”

3.

Conveyance, July 22, 1795—

“Between Richard Standley (G), of Chipping Campden, County of Gloucester, Flax-dresser, eldest son and heir-at-law of Elizabeth Standley (H), his late mother, deceased, who was one of the sisters, and a devisee named in the last will and testament of Robert Hathaway (M), heretofore of Shotton, parish of Old Stratford, County of Warwick, Yeoman, deceased, and Mary, the wife of the said Richard Standley, of the first part; John Hathaway Taylor (I), of Shotton aforesaid, yeoman, of the second part; Thomas Hunt, of Stratford-upon-Avon, County of Warwick, gentleman, of the third part; in consideration of £55 to said Richard Standley, paid by said John Hathaway Taylor, the said Richard Standley did convey unto said John Hathaway Taylor, all that one undivided third part or share, the whole into three equal parts to be divided, of and in all those two several cottages or tenements, and two orchards, &c. &c., situated in Shotton, aforesaid.

“Conveyed in fee to John Hathaway Taylor.”

4.

Fine, Michaelmas Term, 36 George III.—

“Between Thomas Hunt, gentleman, plaintive, Richard Standley, and Mary his wife, to bar dower.”

5.

Will of John Hathaway Taylor (I), dated July 18, 1816.

“John Hathaway Taylor, of Shotton, Lime-burner, bequeathes unto my wife, Mary Taylor (J), and her
 “assigns,

“ assigns, for and during the term of her natural life,
 “ all those my several messuages or tenements, &c.,
 “ situate lying and being in Shottery, parish of Old
 “ Stratford aforesaid, and now in my own and Samuel
 “ Bridges’ occupation as tenant thereof to me; and
 “ from and after the decease of my said wife, I give
 “ and devise the said messuages, &c., unto my son,
 “ William Taylor (L), his heirs and assigns for ever.

“ Proved, 9th September, 1820.”

6.

Mortgage, January 5, 1836.

“ William Taylor (K) to Thomas Taker; mortgage
 “ of Houses and Premises at Shottery, for securing
 “ £100 and interest.

W. S.

7.

Conveyance, October 30, 1838—

“ By William Taylor (K) and the Mortgagee to Mr.
 “ Thomas Barnes, in fee of two messuages, orchards
 “ and gardens and premises, at Shottery, parish of Old
 “ Stratford, County of Warwick. William Taylor re-
 “ ceived £245, consideration money, and Thomas
 “ Taker, the mortgagee, £100 from Mr. Thomas
 “ Barnes, of Luddington.”

8.

Mr. Thomas Barnes, by will, dated January 5, 1855—

“ Devise all those three cottages or tenements—
 “ formerly Hathaways—and situated in Shottery afore-
 “ said, unto William Thompson, his heirs and assigns
 “ for ever.”

Baptism,

Baptism, 1747.—December 18, John Hathaway, son of William Taylor.

1809.—John Taylor and Elizabeth Barnett, married, January 3, at Stratford.

1828.—September 5, John Taylor, buried, aged 49.

1835.—January 10, Mary Taylor, aged 82.

I append a few entries from the Marriage Register of Stratford which are not familiar; though attention has been previously drawn to that of Jan. 17, 1579, when one William Wilfonne married one "*Anne Hathaway of Shottery*."

The extracts from churchwardens' accounts I have not seen before in print. These accounts are full of the names and signatures of persons with whom we are familiar as living in Shakespeare's time.

Marriage Register, Stratford.

1567. January 13.—Lawrentius Walker et Phillippa Hathaway.

1570. October 22.—George Hathaway et Anne Catan, of Loxley.

1572. May 18.—Henry Smith, of Banbury, to Ales Hathaway, of Shottery.

1575. Thomas Hathaway et Margaret Smith.

1579. January 17. — *William Wilfonne et Anne Hathaway, of Shottery.*

June 22.—David Jones et Frances Hathaway.

1634.—Register signed by John Hathaway, churchwarden.

Churchwarden's Accounts.

1633. July 18.

Signed, Tho. Nashe.

"A Levy of Taxation" of £40 throughout the whole parish.

The

The account of William Walford, April,
1618, churchwarden for the year past. Borough of
Stratford:

“Henley St. Ward.

“Received of Rich. Hathaway . . iij^s. iiij^d.”

Sept. die. Junii, Anno 1619.

Accounts signed, Richard Hathaway.

The fifteenth of April, 1628.

Mr. John Hall, Churchwarden for the Borough.

7th day of April, 1629.

Surveyors for the highways.

George Barker, {
John Hathaway, { for the County.

24th day of February, 1627.

Will. Combe.

Ge. Combe.

Richard Hathaway.

8th day of October, 1626, {
27th March, 1627. { R. Hathaway, Bayliffe.

3rd day of April, 1621.

Batholomew Hathaway,

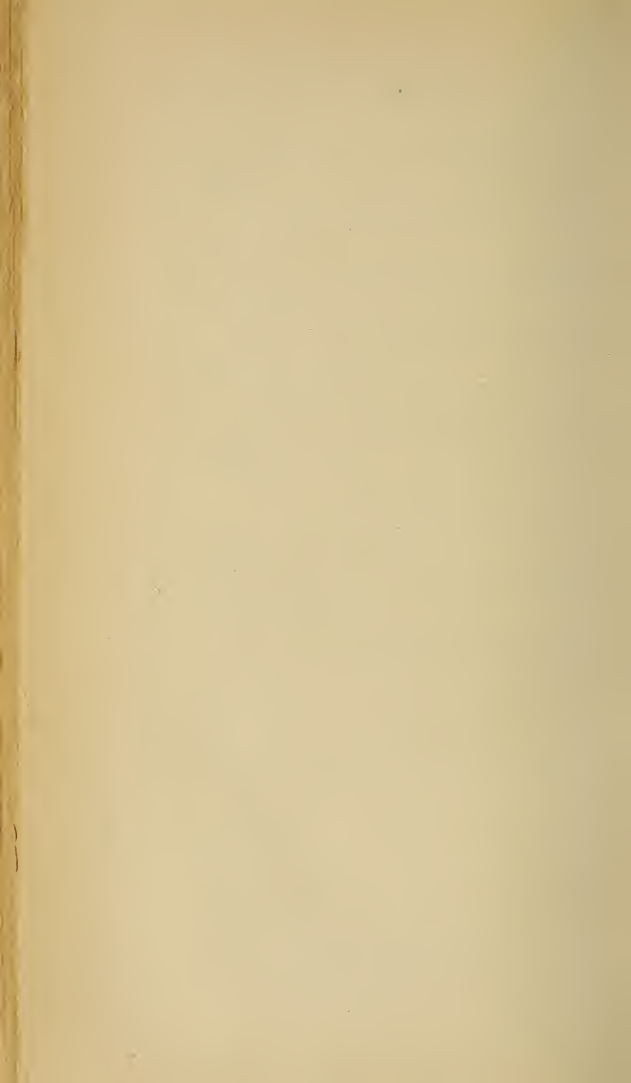
George Quiney, Curat.

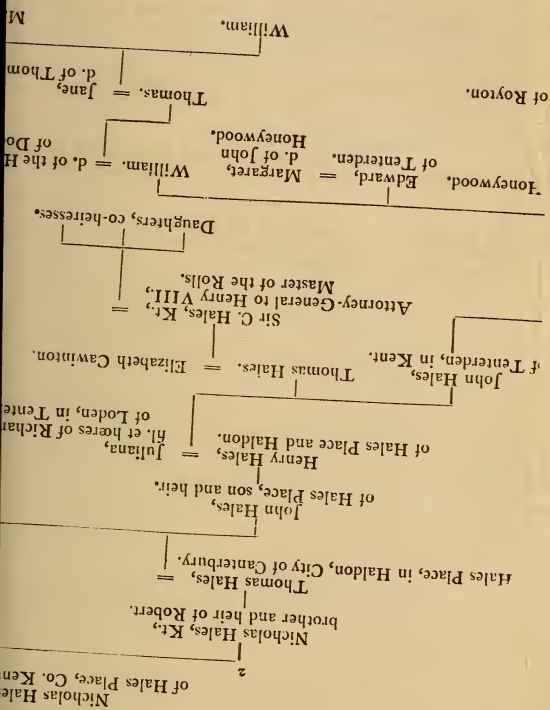
Ditto, April, 28, 1620.

Oct. 17, 1641. Tho. Clopton.

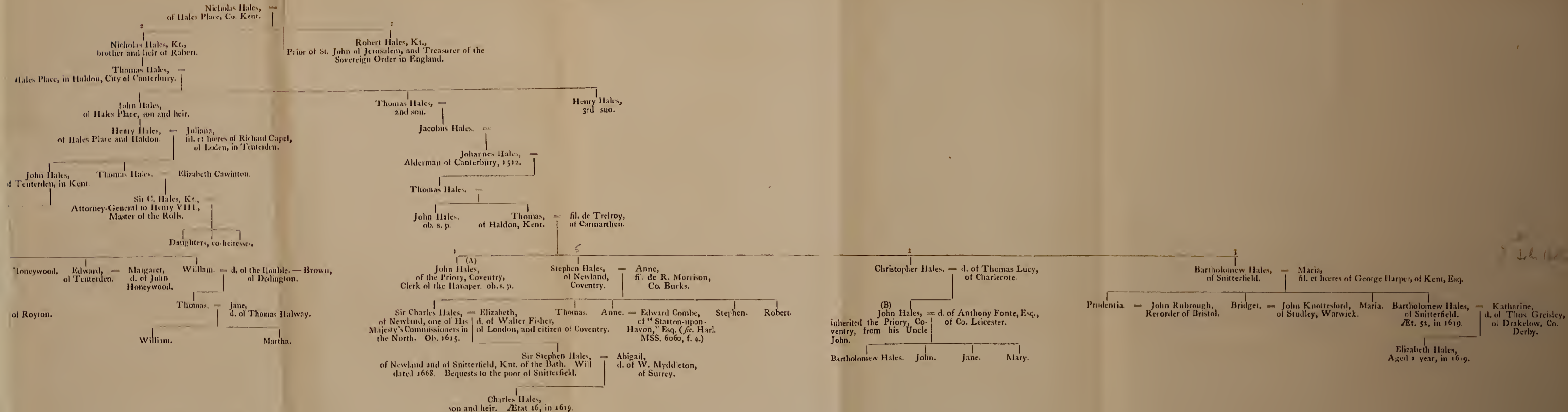
The name of Barnard appears frequently.

FINIS.





— 200 —



s of George Harper, of Kent, Esq.

ord, Maria. Bartholomew Hales, = d. of Katharine,
of Snitterfield. d. of Thos. Greisley,
Aged 52, in 1619. of Drakelow, Co.
Elizabeth Hales, Derby.

Aged 1 year, in 1619.

John Hales
4

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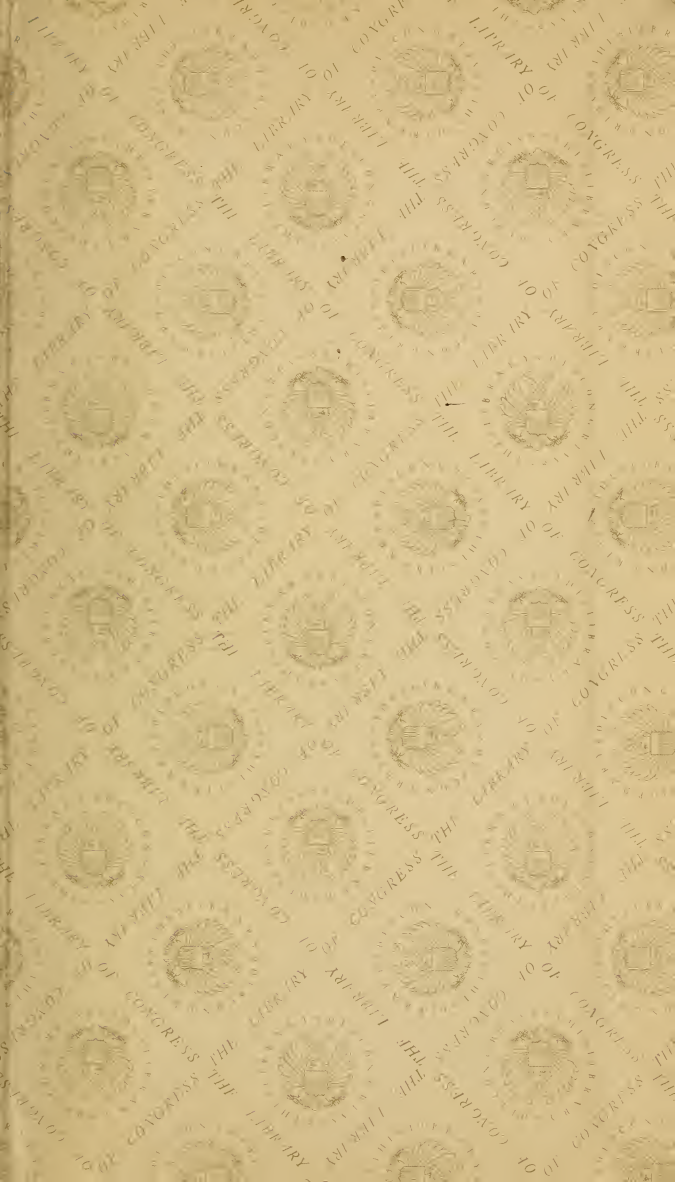
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